

Out-Competing Rivals: How Armed Group Governance Shapes Attitudes in Colombia

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Abstract

What determines the legitimacy of aspiring rulers? Questions about support of the governed are central to theories of state-building and political order. Millions worldwide live under the influence of competing armed groups, yet we know little about how people in these contexts make comparative assessments of would-be rulers. We theorize how local norms, social networks, and goods provision influence these comparative judgments. We report results from a conjoint survey experiment in Colombia among nearly 2,400 respondents across 54 municipalities contested by multiple armed groups. Armed groups that take community norms into account and those that involve local leaders in decision-making are judged less negatively. Additionally, providing services and limiting violence both reduce negative evaluations of armed groups. These findings help us understand political legitimacy under limited statehood and the effects of governance on civilian attitudes in areas of competition.

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Millions worldwide live under the influence of competing armed groups, including rebels, militias, and criminal organizations (Lessing 2021; Bakke, Cunningham and Seymour 2012). How do ordinary people in these contexts make judgments about those who aspire to rule them? In particular, what shapes civilian attitudes towards non-state governance where multiple armed groups compete? These questions are important not only because civilian attitudes affect broader conflict processes (Wood 2003; Hirose, Imai and Lyall 2017), but also because their answers shed light on the sources of political legitimacy and the construction of durable political orders (e.g., Hobbes 1651/1968; Locke 1690/1961; Levi 1989; Tilly 1975, 2009).

While foundational work has largely viewed territorial control as a prerequisite for armed group governance (e.g. Kasfir 2005; Mampilly 2011; Arjona 2016), political and criminal armed groups do frequently govern in areas they do not fully control (Risse and Stollenwerk 2018; Börzel and Risse 2021; Loyle 2021; Loyle et al. 2023). They regulate civilian behavior and provide goods in contested areas of countries as diverse as Afghanistan (Jackson 2018), Brazil (Magaloni, Franco-Vivanco and Melo 2020), India (Waterman 2023), Mali (Weedon and Straus 2023), and South Africa (Cunningham, Huang and Sawyer 2021). Yet, how civilians respond to these efforts remains poorly understood.

We present results from a conjoint survey experiment conducted face-to-face with 2,397 respondents across 54 municipalities of Colombia currently or recently contested by multiple armed groups. The survey asks respondents to evaluate pairs of hypothetical, competing armed groups engaging in forms of governance with randomly varied attributes.¹ We vary fundamental elements of non-state armed group governance, including rule-making and the provision of goods, as well as social network support, violence, and group ideology. Colombia is a fitting context to examine civilian preferences for armed group governance given the presence of large rebel armies and sophisticated criminal groups. These diverse armed actors frequently govern and regulate behavior in urban and rural areas, including where they compete for territorial control (Blattman and Tobón

¹Our pre-analysis plan was pre-registered with the Open Science Framework prior to receiving survey data. It is available at: https://osf.io/txdf4?view_only=f2d95946d6204fd794a55d413d693706

Forthcoming; De Bruin and Weintraub 2023).²

Our results show that the governance decisions that armed groups make in contested areas affect their legitimacy. We find that consulting with local leaders when making decisions about rules and establishing rules that reflect local traditions both decrease negative evaluations of armed groups. Groups that provide goods and services, including dispute resolution, infrastructure, and medicine, or that show restraint in the use of violence, are also judged less negatively. At the same time, we find only weak evidence that social support for armed groups from friends and family or the broader community decreases negative evaluations.

In assessing civilian responses to competitive armed group governance, our study contributes to scholarship on political legitimacy in contexts of limited statehood in several ways (Risse and Stollenwerk 2018; Karim 2020). First, existing scholarship on armed group governance tends to assume that civilians privilege security (e.g. Kalyvas 2006; Kalyvas and Kocher 2007; Lyall, Blair and Imai 2013), but this work does not directly test the consequences of armed group violence alongside other behavior. We show that additional aspects of armed group interactions with civilians have important effects on civilian evaluations of such groups, even where groups use high levels of violence to enforce their rules.

Second, while recent studies have begun to examine how armed groups govern absent territorial control (e.g. Keister 2011; Loyle et al. 2023; Waterman 2023; Jentsch and Steele 2023), and to compare rebel and criminal governance to that of the state (e.g., Revkin 2021; Blattman and Tobón Forthcoming), few assess local residents' attitudes towards armed groups where they directly compete. It is precisely in these environments where civilian attitudes may be particularly important in shaping conflict dynamics (e.g. Kalyvas 2006; Condra and Wright 2019; Rubin 2020). Given that criminal groups typically are unable or unwilling to establish exclusive control, this study also advances our understanding of a broad class of phenomena in contexts of criminal governance (Skarbek 2016; Barnes 2017; Lessing 2021; Moncada 2022).

²We focus on competition between non-state armed groups, rather than between armed groups and the state, because the sources of legitimacy for state- and non-state actors may be different, and because the state tends to be relatively weak where multiple armed groups are present (Risse and Stollenwerk 2018).

Third, this article contributes to our understanding of how the distribution of benefits in violent spaces affects civilian attitudes. Prior research suggests that state efforts to win support by providing economic benefits may be ineffective (e.g. Lyall, Zhou and Imai 2020; Sexton and Zürcher 2023). They also do not consistently reduce insurgent violence (e.g., Berman et al. 2013; Sexton 2016; Weintraub 2016; Lyall 2019). Yet these studies focus exclusively on economic interventions, and on efforts by the state and its allies. In contrast, our findings suggest that non-state armed group provision of goods—dispute resolution, infrastructure, and healthcare—may improve civilian perceptions of these groups. Moreover, we demonstrate that efforts by armed groups to build legitimacy may benefit from tailoring governance approaches to locally-salient traditions, and from incorporating local leaders into decision-making. We are the first to theorize and experimentally demonstrate the impact of these factors on civilian attitudes towards armed groups.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In areas of limited statehood, where the state “lacks the ability to implement and enforce rules and decisions and/or lacks the legitimate monopoly over the means of violence” (Risse and Stollenwerk 2018, 17), the exercise of governance entails competition with other would-be rulers (Mampilly 2011; Magaloni, Franco-Vivanco and Melo 2020; Weigand 2022).³ We argue that civilians living in areas of limited statehood make comparative judgments about governing actors, even when they do not exhibit positive attitudes towards any armed group. Indeed, individuals need not view an armed group in a positive light nor actively support it in order to prefer it to another group. We focus on rules governing civilian behavior as well as the provision of goods and services, which are core features of armed group governance (Weinstein 2007; Mampilly 2011). Additionally, we focus on networks of support for armed groups because both attitudes and behaviors may be shaped by the actions and ideas of others (e.g. Kuran 1991; Petersen 2001).⁴

³Such areas do not necessarily feature sustained combat between armed groups; indeed, some research finds areas where multiple actors govern see less violence against civilians (Aponte González, Hirschel-Burns and Uribe 2023). That said, armed actors may provide governance even in active combat zones.

⁴Our pre-analysis plan also developed hypotheses about the long-term legacies of armed group rule; these are discussed in Appendix K.

COHERENCE WITH COMMUNITY NORMS

A central element of rebel and criminal governance is the establishment of rules that regulate the behaviors of community members (e.g., Arjona 2016; Arias 2017). We argue that civilian attitudes are shaped by whether the rules that armed groups establish take into account community norms. We distinguish between two forms of coherence with community norms: *procedural* coherence, by which we mean the extent to which local leaders are included in decision-making processes for establishing rules, and *conventional* coherence, which denotes whether the rules armed groups adopt for the community conform to local traditions. In contrast, some armed groups neither incorporate local leaders nor adapt their rules to local traditions.

Non-state actors must decide how to incorporate local community perspectives into the rules they establish over civilian behaviors, including permissible conduct in public spaces, movement restrictions, or with whom civilians can have relationships (Weinstein 2007; Mampilly and Stewart 2021). Some armed groups opt to make rules unilaterally, while others choose to incorporate local community representatives into decision-making about these rules (Murtazashvili 2016; Vargas Castillo 2019; Steele and Weintraub 2021). We expect that procedural coherence will reduce negative assessments of armed groups. Where local leaders are themselves perceived as legitimate, we argue that consultation with them is seen as involving the community. Participation may be valued for its own sake (Wood 2003). Alternatively, it may be valued because procedures that allow individuals to provide input are generally perceived as fair, even when the outcome is unfavorable (Tyler 2006). Moreover, even where local leaders are not perceived as legitimate, consulting with those leaders may provide greater consistency, reducing uncertainty about the future form that rebel or criminal governance will take and reducing negative assessments of groups providing such governance.⁵

We further argue that groups that align rules with local customs and limit rule innovation will reduce civilians' negative evaluations of them (Mampilly and Stewart 2021). This was the case for

⁵Local leaders may lack legitimacy, for example, where they are agents of indirect colonial or foreign-imposed rule (e.g. Downes 2021), or where they are corrupt, biased, or ineffective (Blair 2020).

Naparama militia leaders in Mozambique, for example, who were more positively received when they appealed to local beliefs and values, incorporating the use of traditional medicine for personal defense (Jentsch 2022). Armed group rules that draw upon shared community practices may be seen as less of an imposition, increasing public acceptance. In contrast, communities may resist armed group rules that do not align with local norms and traditions. In Peru, resistance to the Shining Path grew once the group “imposed its values and organizational structures, ignoring and negating communal traditions” (Del Pino 1998, 179); for example, the insurgent group banned longstanding Catholic festivals.⁶

We further argue that governing *processes* inclusive of the local community (procedural coherence) will be more important to civilians than *outcomes* that reflect community traditions (conventional coherence).⁷ Even a near-perfect match of rules with community norms and preferences that procedurally excludes community input may unravel. In Syria, for example, while Jabhat al-Nusra reportedly respected local norms and helped enforce existing rules in communities it entered initially, the fact that it did not incorporate local voices into its governance decisions allowed it to unilaterally impose rules increasingly out of step with the local community (Lister 2016). In contrast, consultations with local leaders signal a greater predictability for and control over what rules might apply in the near future. Such predictability is likely to be particularly valuable in contested areas beset by uncertainty. Procedural coherence thus can ameliorate commitment problems that armed groups face when seeking to govern local communities. We derive the following hypotheses:

H1 Procedural coherence: Consulting local leaders when establishing rules for the community reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively.

H2 Conventional coherence: Establishing rules for the community that reflect local traditions reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively.

⁶Of course, some civilians may welcome challenges to local traditions, as may be the case when such traditions are discriminatory against minorities.

⁷Local leaders may help armed groups act upon civilian preferences (van Baalen 2021; Baldwin 2016). We separate the procedures from the outcomes of rulemaking both conceptually and in the design of our survey experiment, where they are randomized independently.

H3 Procedural versus conventional coherence: Consulting local leaders (procedural coherence) reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively more than establishing rules that reflect local traditions (conventional coherence) does.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

The social networks within which individuals are embedded shape their behaviors via “cue-taking” (e.g. Siegel 2009; Campbell 2013). Where expressing political attitudes or engaging in political actions is high-risk, such as in repressive contexts, the incentives to engage in them may depend on the social context and conduct of others (Granovetter 1978; Kuran 1991; Petersen 2001). We argue that *private* attitudes about relative risks, like public behaviors, are shaped by perceptions of what relevant others believe. These relevant others can be either from the broader community or from more intimate networks of friends and family.

In contexts with multiple armed actors, there is a high level of uncertainty about what armed groups are doing and what they are like. Essential information about these armed actors can spread through broad community networks. For example, rumors about the capabilities of nascent armed groups in Uganda were transmitted through coethnic kinship networks (Lewis 2020). These same networks can also convey information about whether community members support armed groups. This information about the extent of an armed group’s perceived support among community members serves as a heuristic for its presumed character. Evaluations of armed groups in contested areas should therefore depend on the extent to which individuals think that members of the broader community support them.

Information about support from intimate social networks might be even more valuable because, in high-risk environments, friends and family are often people’s most and perhaps only trusted connections (Parkinson 2013). In the Philippines, word of mouth among friends and family was a crucial conduit through which information about the credibility of the New People’s Army rebel group was passed between villages (Haim 2018). Likewise, during the civil war in Abkhazia, residents “sought information on the threat posed by the Georgian forces from the social networks they interacted with and trusted at the time” (Shesterinina 2021, 45), leaning particularly on rel-

atives and friends. We expect that the attitudes of personal networks will be more important in shaping support for armed groups than attitudes of other community members because it may be difficult to discern whether community members genuinely support an armed actor or are instead falsifying their preferences due to fear (Kuran 1991; Kalyvas 2006). Additionally, support from relatives and friends may be more informative for personal assessments about whether the armed group would generate benefits or harms. We therefore hypothesize:

H4 Community networks: Support from community members reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively.

H5 Personal networks: Support from personal networks reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively.

H6 Community versus personal networks: Support from personal networks reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively more than support from community members does.

PROVISION OF GOODS AND SERVICES

Armed groups regularly provide goods and services in contested areas (Loyle et al. 2023). In India, the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) built roads, flood defenses, farming and irrigation projects, and schools in areas they did not fully control (Waterman 2023). Similarly, *milícias* in the favela of Rio das Pedras in Rio de Janeiro paved roads, increased access to electricity, and expanded water and sanitation services (Arias 2017, 231). The provision of goods and services may improve the material welfare of individuals or communities, and it can increase perceptions of armed groups' competence and resolve. We therefore argue that the provision of goods and services affects the legitimacy of armed groups.

Of course, armed groups face difficult trade-offs, particularly so in contested areas, as they seek to cultivate support and build legitimacy: they must dedicate resources to countering other geographically-proximate groups while simultaneously providing governance to civilians (Arias

2017). This may mean that services and goods on offer are of lower quality than what residents would ultimately desire (Masullo 2021). In such cases, goods provision may be insufficient to reshape civilian attitudes. However, areas contested by armed groups are areas where the state struggles to provide effective governance. As a result, even low-quality goods and services may generate changes in evaluations of armed groups. For example, in Afghanistan prior to the U.S. withdrawal, even among civilians who did not sympathize with the Taliban, the group's system of dispute resolution was at times perceived as "more accessible, faster, and...fairer than any alternative" (Jackson 2021, 129).

Residents may also respond negatively to armed groups' provision of goods and services because they view *any* such efforts as attempts to exert control. Larkins (2015, 186) describes some residents of the Rio de Janeiro favela of Rocinha who did not want to engage with the dispute resolution mechanism provided by a criminal group because they struggled with "the way they were co-opted as active participants in the maintenance of trafficker-backed public order." However, in violent areas routinely characterized by limited state capacity and poverty, any goods or services provided by armed groups may be sufficient to reduce residents' negative judgments about armed groups. Despite their brutality, criminal gangs in the Zona Norte of Rio de Janeiro have managed to cultivate "criminal legitimacy" by providing gifts to children at holiday parties, maintaining public order, and stimulating the economy (Arias and Barnes 2017, 456). We therefore argue that, although residents may view goods and services provided by armed groups as attempts to extend control, their provision will tend to reduce negative perceptions of armed groups:

H7 Goods and services: Providing goods and services reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively.

We disaggregate different goods and services to understand how their provision shapes civilian attitudes. We focus on dispute resolution, infrastructure investments, and healthcare. All three types of goods may have a substantial impact on communities and are commonly provided by many armed groups globally (e.g., Huang 2016; Albert 2022). Dispute resolution and infrastructure investments may generate more long-term economic resilience for communities when compared to

other kinds of goods and services (Ibáñez et al. 2023), while during public health crises medical care may be particularly valued (Breslawski 2022; De Bruin and Weintraub 2023).

We test three competing hypotheses related to the provision of goods and services. Respondents may especially value order-related goods such as dispute resolution, given that instability, impunity, and commitment problems are widespread in contested areas (Blair et al. 2022; Blattman, Hartman and Blair 2014). Armed groups often prioritize dispute resolution to consolidate power and become de facto administrators of justice (Arjona 2016, 11, 72). Yet armed groups have limited capabilities to enforce decisions in competitive areas given the existence of multiple authorities that could potentially resolve quotidian disputes. Civilians may perceive armed groups' decisions as unenforceable over the medium-term and prefer welfare-related goods that bring concrete material benefits—as both roads and healthcare do. Finally, amidst the context of a global pandemic, civilians might value health care-related services above other goods and services.

H8a Order-Related Goods: Providing dispute resolution reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively more than providing infrastructure or healthcare does.

H8b Welfare-Related Goods: Providing infrastructure and healthcare reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively for the community more than providing dispute resolution does.

H8c Healthcare: Providing healthcare reduces the extent to which an armed group is viewed negatively more than providing dispute resolution or infrastructure does.

SCOPE CONDITIONS

We expect our arguments to hold across a wide range of conflict, post-conflict, and otherwise violent contexts where multiple political or criminal armed groups capable of governing are present. Many contexts meet these criteria. For example, more than 70% of countries contain “significant” areas of limited statehood (Stollenwerk 2018). From 1989 to 2022, UCDP recorded over 900 conflicts between non-state armed actors (Sundberg, Eck and Kreutz 2012; Davies, Pettersson and

Öberg 2023). The arguments we develop may be most applicable where armed groups do not compete for support along ethnic, religious, or racial lines, as these cleavages may produce stronger a priori commitments to specific armed actors. Our scope conditions do however cover identity-based conflicts where multiple armed groups compete for support among the same constituencies.⁸ As the sources of legitimacy for armed groups and state actors are likely to differ systematically, our arguments may not generalize to competition between the state actors and armed non-state groups. We return to this question in the conclusion.

RESEARCH DESIGN

CASE SELECTION

We test our hypotheses in contested areas of Colombia, which bear resemblance to many other territories worldwide characterized by armed group competition. Colombia has experienced a long-running conflict involving multiple political and criminal armed groups. The key historical cleavage in the civil war has been ideological, pitting left-wing rebels in favor of radical redistribution of wealth and political power against status-quo minded national and regional elites who mobilized paramilitaries to support their cause (Karl 2017; Steele 2017). Despite the 2016 signing of a peace agreement with the largest rebel group, the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia–Ejército del Pueblo* (FARC-EP), strong rebel armies, including the *Ejército de Liberación Nacional* (ELN) and dissident factions of the FARC-EP, remain active. The lucrative drug trade, combined with illegal mining, has also caused criminal armed groups—many with no discernible political ideology—to proliferate throughout the country.

We study Colombia because it fits our scope conditions: it features areas of limited statehood where multiple non-state armed groups compete and seek to govern civilian populations. While the Colombian state is comparatively strong relative to other countries that have experienced civil war and maintains a presence in all municipalities, state capacity varies geographically (e.g. Holmes,

⁸It is not uncommon that multiple armed groups claim to represent the same ideological, religious, or ethnic constituencies (e.g. Nemeth 2014; Tokdemir et al. 2021; Pischedda 2020; Balcells, Chen and Pischedda 2022).

Piñeres and Curtin 2010; Acemoglu, García-Jimeno and Robinson 2015; Ballvé 2020).⁹ We focus on contested areas where multiple armed groups are or have recently been present, and where the state struggles to provide effective governance.¹⁰ Guerrilla, neo-paramilitary, and rebel organizations have taken advantage of these conditions: in each year between 2008 and the first half of 2022, for example, neo-paramilitaries had a presence in at least 27 of the country’s 32 departments, while between 2017 and the first half of 2022, FARC dissidents and the ELN each had a presence in at least 15 (Indepaz 2022). In other words, each day many civilians in Colombia compare the governance actions taken by multiple non-state groups that seek to rule their communities.

Many of these groups have indeed demonstrated significant governance capacity, both alongside state efforts and in their absence (e.g. Arjona 2016; Otero-Bahamon, Uribe and Peñaranda-Currie 2022; Daly 2022). For example, both rebel groups and criminal organizations in Colombia regularly have provided dispute resolution services (Arjona 2016; Blair et al. 2022). The FARC undertook extensive road construction (Uribe, Otero-Bahamón and Peñaranda 2021; Currie, Otero-Bahamon and Uribe 2021), and many paramilitary groups and criminal organizations have also financed, built, or paved roads (Brewer Norman 2012; Schmidt 2023). Colombian armed groups ensured that government-issued quarantines were enforced and even provided local populations with masks and other protective gear during the COVID-19 pandemic (Idler and Hochmuller 2020; Angelo 2020). Public opinion data also indicates that armed groups enjoy some level of support (e.g. Steele 2017; Rodríguez-Raga et al. 2005).¹¹

SAMPLING

We survey individuals who have recently experienced armed group competition or for whom such an experience likely would be realistic. We therefore administer the survey in 54 municipalities of

⁹Relative to other conflicts, the civil war in Colombia is long and complicated by the role of coca. Yet, many of the armed groups in contested territories today have formed more recently, and many other conflicts feature natural resources which finance non-state armed actors. Colombia is also not an outlier in terms of the coexistence of democratic institutions and organized violence (Steele and Schubiger 2018; Matanock and Staniland 2018).

¹⁰In our survey, the modal answer regarding the frequency of police patrols in respondents’ communities was “once per month.”

¹¹For example, one survey from 2005 found that 10% of Colombians had confidence in the FARC, 12% in the ELN, and 16% in paramilitaries (Rodríguez-Raga et al. 2005). Given concerns about social desirability bias, these estimates likely represent a lower bound on true levels of support.

Colombia characterized by the presence of multiple armed groups. To identify contested municipalities, we draw on internal data from the following organizations: the Colombian National Police, the Colombian Attorney General’s Office, and Ideas for Peace Foundation (*Fundación Ideas para la Paz*, FIP). Each defines the presence of armed groups based on criminal investigation and/or fieldwork rather than measures of violence such as clashes. We define contested municipalities as those in which two or more armed groups were active in *any* of the three sources between 2015 and 2018.¹² To be included, armed groups must have demonstrated capacity for sustained presence over some stretch of territory; we thus exclude neighborhood gangs in urban centers tied to small tracts of territory (e.g. *pandillas* in Cali or *combos* in Medellín).

We classify 103 municipalities as “contested” (Figure 1 and Table A2), corresponding to approximately 9% of Colombia’s 1,123 municipalities. From this list, we exclude 10 large cities (e.g. Medellín) because armed group behavior and governance vary across urban and rural areas — including in the profile of recruits, level of criminal know-how, and scale of rents that can be obtained via micro-trafficking and extortion (in cities) or transshipment of drugs and other contraband (in rural areas). Our sample includes respondents from 54 municipalities selected based on a stratified sampling procedure with five regional strata (Caribe, Pacífico, Territorios Nacionales, Antioquia, and Santanderes) and strata based on historic FARC control.¹³ Municipalities are selected with a probability proportional to their 2022 projected population size as calculated by Colombia’s census agency (*Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística*, DANE).

¹²For a list of included armed groups, see Table A1.

¹³We identify areas with FARC control based on the Colombian government’s designation of a municipality as eligible for the Territorially Focused Development Program (*Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial*, PDET); these areas were prioritized for implementation of the 2016 peace agreement.

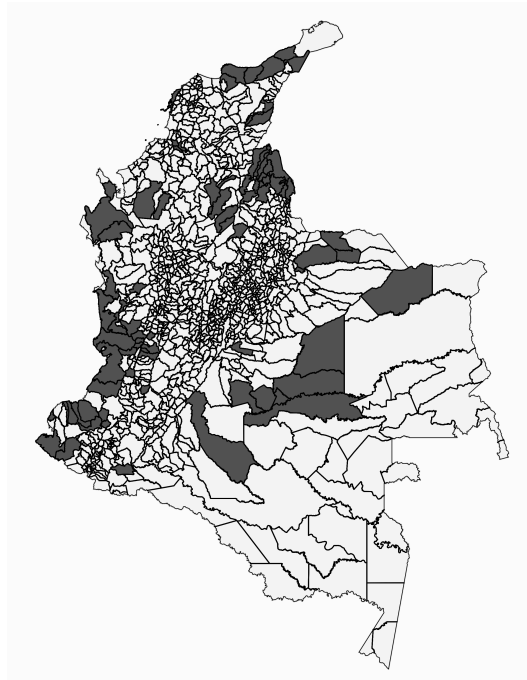


Figure 1: Contested municipalities in Colombia

Within selected municipalities, our survey covers 2,397 respondents surveyed by the Colombian firm *Sistemas Especializados de Información* (SEI) between July 3 and August 7, 2022. Respondents were selected both in municipal capitals (*cabeceras municipales*) and rural hamlets (*centros poblados*).¹⁴ Hamlets within a municipality were selected with a probability proportional to their projected 2022 population as calculated by DANE. Within municipal capitals and selected hamlets, blocks were selected randomly. Enumerators determined the number of inhabited dwellings in each selected block, and software randomly selected dwellings from this list.¹⁵ Within each selected dwelling, the enumerator listed the number of households, and the software randomly selected one per dwelling. The enumerator then determined the number of individuals within the household, and the system randomly chose one person over the age of 18 who was capable of responding and present in the municipality during enumeration.¹⁶

¹⁴Hamlets consist of twenty or more continuous homes, typically laid out in a grid-like format.

¹⁵We did not preregister how many dwellings we would select per block. The number of respondents within a given block was the product of nonresponse, the survey firm's attempts to obtain the desired number of respondents in each municipality and strata, and the size of the block. See Figure A3 for the number of respondents and blocks per municipality, and see Table A1 for a comparison of how many surveys the firm anticipated and ultimately completed within each municipality.

¹⁶Appendix C describes adjustments in the selection procedure at the household level to address gender imbalance.

SURVEY DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

We evaluate our hypotheses via a conjoint experimental design (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2014; Hainmueller, Hangartner and Yamamoto 2015). Conjoint experiments reduce social desirability bias (Horiuchi, Markovich and Yamamoto 2022), perform well in comparison to behavioral benchmarks (Hainmueller, Hangartner and Yamamoto 2015), and provide a partial solution to violations of information equivalence (Dafoe, Zhang and Caughey 2018). In our survey, respondents are presented with 5 pairs of hypothetical armed actors competing for territorial control. Armed groups' attributes and their possible levels are listed in Table 1. The levels of all attributes are varied randomly from one profile to the next. To evaluate civilian attitudes, we use both forced choice questions in which respondents decide which armed group in each pair would be worse for the community, and rating questions in which respondents indicate how bad a given armed group would be for the community (on a scale from 1 to 5).

When introducing the armed groups, the survey prompt emphasizes that we are asking about *hypothetical* groups in order to reduce the sensitivity of the question and to minimize respondents' potential discomfort.¹⁷ The prompt reads:

In some communities, illegal armed groups such as insurgents or drug trafficking organizations try to interact with the local population. This includes establishing rules, providing services, and asking for money. Sometimes these groups compete with other illegal armed groups within the same community.

Imagine that this were your community and that two armed groups were competing to influence it.

I am going to present you five pairs of these *imaginary* armed groups so that you can, in each case, tell me which of these groups would be worse for the community, if the groups were real.

It is important to clarify that these examples are not real but rather *fictitious*. If you are not sure of your response, please try your best to choose one of the two options.

Now I am going to present the first example of *imaginary* armed groups. Do you want to read it alone, read it together, or listen to it?

Table A12 in the appendix provides a demographic comparison between the population in our universe of contested municipalities and our sample.

¹⁷Recent experimental work indicates that informing respondents that a scenario is hypothetical does not affect responses in substantive ways (Brutger et al. 2023).

We include attributes to capture our core theoretical arguments concerning conventional and procedural coherence, social network support, and the kinds of goods and services that armed groups provide. Note that because it may be implausible for many armed groups to obtain the support of a majority of a community, we operationalize social network as support from “several” members of the community or friends and family. We discuss the implications of this choice below. We also include the level of violence that armed groups use to enforce rules, as well as armed group ideology, two additional attributes prominent in prior literature (e.g., Wood 2003; Keister 2011; Lyall, Blair and Imai 2013; Costalli and Ruggeri 2015; Masullo 2021). Because most groups in contested areas cannot credibly promise to monopolize violence and provide security to the whole community, we focus on an aspect of violence that armed groups *do* have within their control: how much violence they use to punish deviations from their rules. We include political ideology as captured on the left-right spectrum because the “master cleavage” of the civil war in Colombia has been ideological (e.g. Ugarriza and Craig 2013; Gutierrez Sanín 2019); moreover, ideological identifications are relatively salient in Colombia (e.g. García-Sánchez and Plata-Caviedes 2020; Levy 2023).¹⁸

The attributes are designed such that that no combination of attribute levels is highly unrealistic, implausible, or likely to signal a specific armed group. For example, groups that provide goods and services may also wield high levels of violence to enforce their rules. Similarly, both left- and right-wing groups may incorporate local leaders into decision-making, even if they do not have significant support within a given community. An example pairing of hypothetical armed groups can be found in Table 2.

¹⁸In our sample, many respondents clearly identify with leftist or right-wing ideologies: on a scale from 1 (left) to 10 (right), 10% reported an ideology of 1 while 19% an ideology of 10.

Table 1: Attributes and Levels

Attribute	Level
<i>Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group does very little to benefit the community. - The group ensures the availability of medications. - The group maintains and improves roads. - The group resolves disputes between neighbors.
<i>Rules</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group doesn't take into account local priorities when making rules for the community. - The group establishes rules for the community that reflect local traditions. - Before establishing rules for the community, the group consults local leaders.
<i>Support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Few people support the group. - Several members of the community support the group. - Several friends and family members support the group.
<i>Punishment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group punishes very violently people who break the rules. - The group punishes with little violence people who break the rules.
<i>Ideology</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The group has no position on political issues. - The group has a left-wing ideology. - The group has a right-wing ideology.

Table 2: Example Task

Group 1		Group 2
The group does very little to benefit the community.	<i>Services</i>	The group maintains and improves roads.
The group establishes rules for the community that reflect local traditions.	<i>Rules</i>	Before establishing rules for the community, the group consults local leaders.
Several members of the community support the group.	<i>Support</i>	Few people support the group.
The group punishes with little violence people who break the rules.	<i>Punishment</i>	The group punishes with little violence people who break the rules.
The group has a left-wing ideology.	<i>Ideology</i>	The group has a right-wing ideology.

Following the presentation of the two profiles, we ask respondents to choose which group would be worse for the community, and then to rate how bad each group would be. We ask “how bad or negative” the armed group would be for the community, thus avoiding eliciting positive assessments of armed groups. Even though we present hypothetical profiles, asking for positive assessments could produce resistance or discomfort. Moreover, we are interested in relative preferences, even if overall attitudes toward any armed group may be negative. The questions are:

Forced Choice: In your opinion, which of these two groups would be worse for the community?

Rating Group 1: We are going to think about the same groups. How bad or negative would group 1 be for the community? (1 not at all - 5 very)

Rating Group 2: We are going to think about the same groups. How bad or negative would group 2 be for the community? (1 not at all - 5 very)

Our principal quantity of interest is the average marginal component effect (AMCE) (Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto 2014). To calculate the AMCE, each outcome is regressed on several indicator variables, with each indicator representing an attribute level, and one level per attribute constituting the baseline. Standard errors are clustered by respondent. Additionally, we rely on marginal means and omnibus F-tests when testing for differences across respondent subgroups (Leeper, Hobolt and Tilley 2022).

There are two caveats regarding interpretation of the results. First, AMCEs depend on the distribution of attributes used for averaging; hence, they are ideally derived from profile distributions mimicking those occurring in real life (de la Cuesta, Egami and Imai 2022). We were prevented from taking this approach by data availability. Second, we cannot interpret the results in terms of individuals' "raw" or majority preferences (Abramson, Koçak and Magazinnik 2022; Ganter 2023); instead, the AMCE indicates the average causal effect of a characteristic on an armed group's evaluation among respondents, compared to the baseline attribute (Bansak et al. 2023).

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In designing and fielding the survey, we took several steps to protect enumerators and respondents.¹⁹ First, we prioritized physical safety. Any municipality or rural hamlet that the survey firm deemed unsafe was excluded; see Appendix C for further details.²⁰ Protocols were also established to physically protect respondents and enumerators from COVID-19.²¹ Moreover, we opted not to pay respondents to avoid subjecting them to increased attention by others, including armed groups. While unlikely, we sought to eliminate the possibility that respondents receiving payments could become targets of suspicion or crime.

We also sought to minimize the potential for the survey to cause respondent distress. We alerted respondents to the survey's content during the informed consent and indicated that they

¹⁹This survey received IRB approval from four institutions: details are redacted here for anonymity.

²⁰This would affect our results if civilians in these areas had different preferences, yet nearly all municipalities in our sample have experienced significant insecurity in recent years. Additionally, victimization and PDET status do not seem to affect responses to the conjoint (Table A6).

²¹Enumerators maintained social distance, used face coverings, and frequently washed their hands. They underwent COVID-19 symptom screenings twice daily, and respondents were screened at the beginning of the interview.

could skip any questions or end the survey at any time. As described above, the prompt emphasized to respondents that the questions concerned fictitious rather than real armed groups. The conjoint design also minimized the sensitivity of the core questions by preventing researchers and enumerators from identifying which attribute(s) shaped individuals' responses.

To protect respondents' anonymity, we did not collect names, birth dates, or government identification numbers that could identify respondents. Household addresses used for sampling and audio recordings of a random subsample of interviews for quality control were temporarily retained by the survey firm until quality checks were completed, and then permanently deleted. We also excluded hamlets with fewer than 68 households to prevent potential identification of respondents by inference. All survey data collected was automatically encrypted. No individually identifiable data was made accessible to researchers.

RESULTS

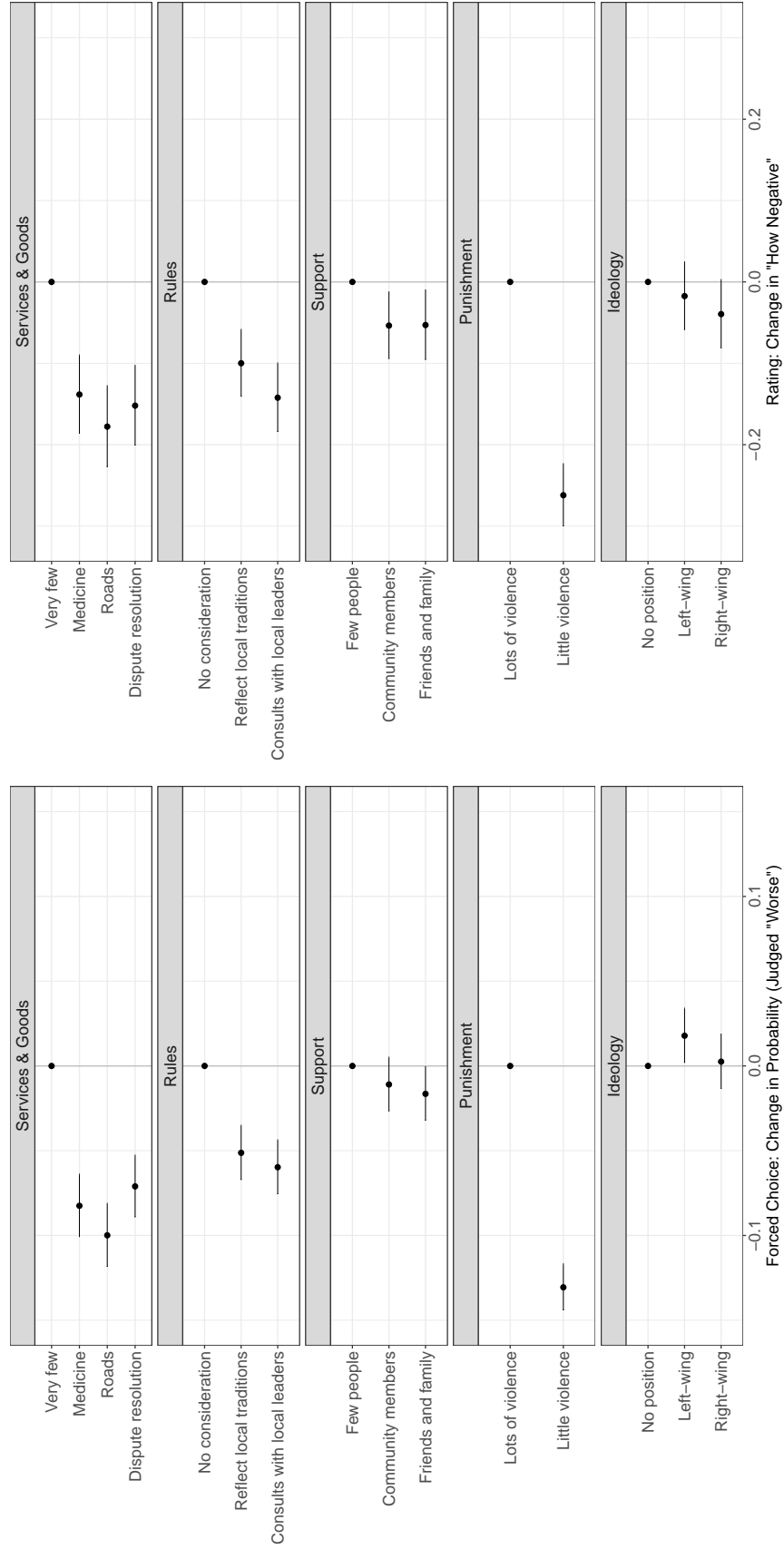
Figure 2 presents our main results. The dots with horizontal lines represent the level-specific AMCEs and 95% confidence intervals, while the dots on the vertical middle line depict the baseline level of each attribute.²² The left panel presents results for the forced choice outcome; the right panel presents results for the ratings outcome.

In line with our expectations, we find that civilian attitudes towards armed group governance in contested areas are shaped by the choices that armed groups make. Armed groups that create rules reflecting local traditions, consult with local leaders, and provide goods are evaluated less negatively than those that do not, though the specific type of good presented does not appear to matter. We find partial support for the expectation that procedural coherence reduces negative evaluations more than conventional coherence. In contrast, we find only weak support for our hypotheses about social networks. We discuss each of these results in turn.²³

²²Numerical results are in Table A4. Unless otherwise noted, throughout the results discussion, statistical significance refers to p-values below .05.

²³Randomization was successful and there were no task order (carryover) effects, although there were profile order effects (see Figure A4, Tables A5-A6). Overall, results are robust to the use of weights (Figure A3), adjusting for multiple hypothesis testing (Tables A7-A8), accounting for the clusters and stratas used in the survey design (Table A9), and removing respondents who may not have been paying attention (Figure A8). There was limited heterogeneity across subgroups (see Section G), though we discuss some exceptions below.

Figure 2: Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs) of Governance Attributes



Note: Numerical results are presented in Table A4

Regarding coherence with community norms, we find that, compared to rule-making that does not take the community into account, rules reflecting local traditions reduce the probability of an armed group being characterized as worse for the community by 5.1 percentage points (95% CI = -.067, -.035), while those made in consultation with local leaders reduce the probability by 6.0 percentage points (95% CI = -.076, -.044). The rating results echo these findings, providing support for H1 and H2.²⁴ Furthermore, in the rating analysis, we find that consultations with leaders have a slightly stronger effect than coherence with traditions, providing partial support for our argument that procedural coherence is more impactful than conventional coherence (H3). The difference between consultations and conformity with traditions, however, is not statistically significant with the forced choice outcome.²⁵ Our hypothesis about the relative importance of procedural coherence over conventional coherence was motivated by the expectation that the former would serve as a more credible signal of armed groups' intentions and predictability. That support for this hypothesis is limited might suggest that contested areas feature less uncertainty than anticipated; alternatively, armed groups may struggle to send credible signals in such places.

Our hypotheses about social networks receive less support. In line with our expectations (H5), we find that support from a respondent's friends and family reduces the probability that an armed group is judged as worse for the community by 1.6 percentage points (95% CI = -.032, -.001), compared to groups that receive support from only a few. Support from intimate social networks and from community members also reduce negative ratings of armed groups, but these substantive effects are small at 0.05 points on the 5-point ratings scale (95% CIs = -.096, -.010 and -.095, -.013). Moreover, while we find that support from the community matters in the rating outcome, it is not significant in the forced choice (H4); nor is there evidence that support from one's personal network is more important than support from the broader community (H6).²⁶

²⁴These findings are also in line with recent research on what van Baalen (2021) has referred to as "rebel responsiveness."

²⁵Results are similar when adding weights, with differences between the two slightly more pronounced for the forced choice outcome than rating (Figure A3).

²⁶The weighted results lead to similar mixed conclusions. For the forced choice outcome, support from community members reduces negative evaluations ($p < 0.05$), as does support from friends and family (albeit at $p < 0.1$), but the coefficients are not significant with the rating outcome (Figure A3). The forced choice and ratings results regarding networks of support, similarly, are not very robust to adjusting for multiple hypotheses.

In interpreting these results, one consideration is that we worded the attribute on community support in a relatively subtle way, shifting from armed groups as supported by “few people” to being supported by “several members of the community” or “several friends and family.” This wording ensures that all levels of social network support are compatible with other attributes; respondents may have thought it implausible for “most” or “all” of their community to support a group that used high levels of violence, for example. However, it also implies that differences between attribute levels may have been less apparent to respondents. The estimates on social network support are, therefore, likely conservative.

Turning to goods provision, Figure 2 shows that service provision reduces the probability of being judged more negatively. Compared to no service provision, providing medicines reduces negative judgements by 8.2 percentage points (95% CI = -.101, -.064); roads reduces them by 10.0 percentage points (95% CI = -.118, -.081) and dispute resolution reduces them by 7.1 percentage points (95% CI = -.089, -.053). The related AMCEs are substantively similar and statistically significant for the rating outcome. These findings provide support for H7. If civilians in contested areas generally preferred being left alone to receiving services, and thus viewed all goods provision with skepticism, we would expect to see no effects on attitudes here. The same would be true if goods provision were insufficient to shape civilian attitudes, as recent scholarship on economic aid provided by states suggests (e.g. Lyall, Zhou and Imai 2020; Sexton and Zürcher 2023). Instead, our results provide support for the argument that goods provision in contested areas affects the relative legitimacy of armed groups.

Interestingly, while providing goods and services significantly improves perceptions of armed groups, the *type* of service provided appears not to matter much: we find little difference between the effects of order-, welfare-, and healthcare-related goods (H8a-c). There is one exception: compared to dispute resolution, roads reduce the probability of a more negative assessment by 2.9 percentage points in the forced choice outcome (95% CI = -.047, -.011); however, this difference is not significant in the rating results.²⁷ We consider it unlikely that these goods have similar ef-

²⁷Even in areas heavily affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, armed groups that provide medicines are no less likely to be characterized as worse for the community (Table A6).

fects because they are perceived to be of low quality. If this were the case, we would not expect the substantial impact of these goods on the evaluations of armed groups that we see. Alternatively, civilians may not distinguish between armed groups providing different goods because groups that provide one type of good also tend to provide others. While we cannot rule out this possibility, we note that evidence on this point is mixed. Cross-national data on rebel governance suggests that, when rebels establish laws regarding civilian behavior, they also tend to provide health services, infrastructure, and mediation of civilian disputes (Albert 2022). At the same time, work on armed group governance in Colombia does not find a strong correlation between the provision of dispute resolution and economic benefits (De Bruin and Weintraub 2023).

While there is no consistent hierarchy among order- and welfare-related goods on average, there is some variation in effects across groups of respondents (Leeper, Hobolt and Tilley 2022). In particular, for urban residents, welfare-related goods — infrastructure and healthcare — reduce negative perceptions of armed groups to a greater extent than dispute resolution, an order-related good.²⁸ This finding should be interpreted with caution, as we did not theorize about this form of subgroup heterogeneity in our pre-analysis plan. However, it is possible that urban residents have a stronger hierarchy of preferences because they experience stronger presence and service provision by the state.

We also find that violence is important in shaping views of how bad a group would be for the community. Figure 2 shows that the use of “little violence” as opposed to “lots of violence” in enforcing rules reduces the probability of being judged more negatively by 13 percentage points (95% CI = -.144, -.117), with similar findings for the rating outcome. These effects are substantively large, as might be anticipated.²⁹ In terms of ideology, compared to groups that do not take a position on political issues, having a leftist ideology increases the probability of being judged more negatively by 1.8 percentage points (95% CI = .002, .034).³⁰ Finally, we test whether coherence

²⁸See Appendix G.

²⁹Rural respondents, leftist respondents, and those in rural or less frequently policed areas are more sensitive to violence than others (see Appendix G).

³⁰This finding is not robust to the addition of weights (Figure A3). Right-wing ideologies lead to less negative evaluations in the rating outcome, though this AMCE is only statistically significant at the $p < 0.1$ level.

with community norms and service provision matter even for those groups that use high levels of violence to enforce their rules. We find that they do.³¹ The effects of norms and service provision also do not appear to depend on group ideology.³²

In summary, our findings show that many of the governance decisions armed groups in contested areas make can succeed in shaping civilians' views of them. In particular, rebel and criminal groups that establish rules that reflect community traditions and involve local leaders in decision-making are perceived to be less bad or negative for the community than those that do not. The provision of goods and services, including dispute resolution, infrastructure investments, and healthcare, also improves perceptions of armed groups.

CONCLUSIONS

Armed groups routinely compete with one another to control territory where the state's capacity is limited. While a growing body of evidence shows that armed groups provide governance in contested areas, we know little about how civilians form comparative judgments about competing armed groups that seek to rule them. We present results from a conjoint survey experiment featuring hypothetical armed groups fielded in contested areas of Colombia, and show that armed groups' governance choices shape civilian attitudes in significant and substantial ways. In particular, establishing rules that reflect local traditions, consulting with local leaders, and offering goods and services cause less negative evaluations of armed groups. However, we only find limited evidence that social network support matters, and that inclusive governing processes reduce unfavorable assessments more than rules that reflect local traditions do. Our study is the first to provide experimental evidence about how civilians respond to different elements of armed group governance in contested areas where civilian support may be particularly impactful.

Our results hold broader implications for understanding armed group competition and efforts to build political legitimacy. First, while existing scholarship emphasizes the role of violence in shaping civilian attitudes, we find that civilians are also sensitive to the perceived match be-

³¹See Figure A7. Note that the tests in this figure were not preregistered.

³²One partial exception is for right-leaning groups, for whom consultation with local leaders and creating rules that reflect local traditions are not associated with less negative views.

tween armed group rules and local norms. This suggests that armed groups seeking legitimacy can benefit from locally-tailored governance, either by incorporating local leaders into decision-making processes or establishing rules that reflect pre-existing local traditions. Second, rebel and criminal groups may not have the ability to reduce overall violence in contested areas, but they can exercise restraint when enforcing rules governing civilian behavior; we show, indeed, that they have incentives to do so. Third, armed groups receive substantial dividends from offering dispute resolution, roads, and medicine. The finding that providing *any* of these goods or services reduce civilians' rejection of the group suggests that the bar to "outcompete" rivals through service provision might be relatively low. This may help explain why rebel and criminal actors in contested areas continue to provide goods and services, despite the costs of doing so. Future work should explore a broader variety of relationships among armed groups, and between armed groups and the state. While our primary interest in this paper is contexts of competition, state and non-state armed actors can also collaborate or coexist with each other without competing (Staniland 2012; Barnes 2017; UCDP 2022; Magaloni, Franco-Vivanco and Melo 2020; Moncada 2022). The components of governance that we study may operate differently in such contexts.

More broadly, these results suggest potential differences in how governments and armed groups can build legitimacy in areas of limited statehood. While state-led efforts to provide economic benefits during armed conflict have shown mixed results in increasing support for the government (e.g. Lyall, Zhou and Imai 2020; Sexton and Zürcher 2023), our findings imply that non-state armed groups can benefit from the provision of goods and services. This discrepancy between how the state and non-state armed groups can build legitimacy may reflect the lower expectations that civilians have of armed groups than of the state. Future research should explicitly compare armed groups to the state to empirically assess this possibility. Yet given how widespread areas of partial state governance are, it is important to understand the sources of political legitimacy for non-state actors in these areas. This study finds that, even in contexts characterized by violent contestation, political and criminal armed groups have meaningful incentives to provide services and to incorporate the views of local residents into their governance.

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Supplementary Appendices

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A SAMPLING PLANS

Table A2 provides list of contested municipalities as well as information about which of these were selected. We define contested municipalities as those where multiple (two or more) of the following armed groups were present between 2015 and 2018: FARC dissidents, National Liberation Army (ELN), Popular Liberation Army (EPL), Clan del Golfo (or Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia), Los Rastrojos, Los Puntilleros, La Constru, Clan Isaza, La Empresa, Los Pachenca, Los Botalones, Los Costeños, Los Caquetaños, Los Acuamanes, and Águilas Negras. These groups include guerrillas, neo-paramilitary or paramilitary successor organizations, factions of demobilized left-wing guerrillas which have continued fighting or remobilized, and organizations dedicated principally to drug trafficking (Table A1). We describe here armed actors whose presence in a municipality between 2015 and 2018 was used to classify it as contested.

First, we include the ELN. Since its founding in the mid-1960s, the ELN has successfully challenged state authority and governed stretches of the country. While its control and influence has varied over time, in recent years it has controlled territory in regions of traditional strength (e.g. El Catatumbo; the middle of Cauca; Arauca; and the Bajo Cauca region of Antioquia), in addition to expanding into new areas following the FARC’s demobilization (e.g. Vichada), where it began to compete with dissidents of the FARC and the Clan del Golfo (described below), among other actors. The ELN is thought to be composed of nearly 2,000 members, many of whom are also active across Venezuelan territory (Unit 2018; Indepaz 2021).

Second, we include so-called neo-paramilitaries or paramilitary successor organizations. These groups typically do not have a national presence, but rather control territory in particular regions. This includes the Águilas Negras (initially in Norte Santander, with ties to right-wing elements of the Colombian military); La Empresa (formed out of the partial demobilization of the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia’s Bloque Calima and its Pacific Front, and strongest in Buenaventura (Álvarez et al. 2017, 62)); and La Constru (formed by mid-level commanders ordered to defect from the paramilitary demobilization process in the mid-2000s and strongest in Putumayo (ColombiaReports 2018; Semana 2018b)).

Smaller, more localized paramilitary successor groups such as Clan Isaza, Los Botalones, and Los Costeños are also included in our dataset. Clan Isaza began as a local paramilitary group in the Magdalena Medio in the 1970s and was later integrated into the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (Buitrago 2018). The group is dedicated to narcotrafficking, extortion, and sub-leasing of properties for processing cocaine in Antioquia (Justicia 2014). The Clan Isaza has competed and cooperated at times with the Botalones. The Botalones are geographically limited to the Magdalena Medio and principally linked to narcotrafficking, extortion, and contract killings. The founders of the Los Costeños were leaders of a paramilitary group on the Caribbean Coast.³³ Today the group has a strong presence in the department of Atlántico, especially in Santa Marta, where it engages in extortion, contract killings and commercialization of illicit drugs. Los Pachenca were created by a former member of the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia with a limited radius of activity in the department of Magdalena, on the Caribbean coast. According to Álvarez et al. (2017, 82-83), Los Pachenca has both a standing, permanently-operating structure while also subcontracting smaller criminal gangs for specific tasks. The group is principally dedicated to extortion, especially in Santa Marta, although it has also clashed with the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia for

³³The Bloque Héroes de los Montes de María.

control of microtrafficking in another coastal city, Cartagena (Dario Rodriguez 2017).

Not all “remnant” groups are reconstituted right-wing paramilitaries; some partially demobilized left-wing groups have also rearmed. This includes, most prominently, FARC dissidents; estimates vary as to how many FARC fighters remain in their reincorporation processes and how many have rejoined dissident groups (Indepaz 2021; ARN 2021).³⁴ We do not include the FARC-EP (the group that negotiated with the Colombian government and ultimately demobilized in 2016) because FARC combatants during this period were already abandoning their traditional areas of influence and heading towards what would become demobilization zones. Another left-wing “remnant group,” the Popular Liberation Army (EPL), demobilized in the early 1990s but residual elements continue to operate and clash with other armed criminal and political groups, including with the ELN in areas such as El Catatumbo (Semana 2018a).

We also include organizations principally dedicated to drug trafficking, including the Clan del Golfo (also known as the Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia, the Clan Úsuga or the Urabeños), which is likely present in nearly 150 municipalities and relies on more than 2,000 members, counting direct membership and subcontracting of services (Posso, Palacios and Perafán 2020; Posso et al. 2021). Los Rastrojos, borne out of the Norte del Valle cartel in the early 2000s, was limited to the Valle del Cauca until its expansion into the central coffee-growing region (e.g. Quindío and Risaralda) and the northern-most department of La Guajira. Their strength would wane after multiple leaders were captured and extradited to the United States (e.g. Tiempo 2016; Crime 2018). La Cordillera, is a geographically-limited criminal organization dedicated to microtrafficking in the departments of Risaralda, Caldas y Quindío, although through alliances with other groups it may have influence in other departments, including Valle del Cauca (Matta Colorado 2018). Los Caquetaños principally serve as intermediaries in the drug production and distribution supply chain, run coca refining laboratories, and are primarily active in the Colombian Amazon (Colombiano 2015). Los Acuamanes were a regionally-limited criminal group in Norte de Santander and Sur de Bolívar—with particular control over neighborhoods in Barrancabermeja—especially dedicated to the trafficking and commercialization of illicit drugs and extortion (e.g. Becerra 2018). In early 2018, many of its members were captured, leading the Attorney General’s office to declare the group officially neutralized.

Table A1: Groups Used to Define Contested Municipalities

Insurgents	National Liberation Army (ELN)
Splinter/Remnant Groups	FARC Dissidents Popular Liberation Army (EPK)
Paramilitary successor organizations	Águilas Negras La Empresa La Constru Clan Isaza Los Botalones Los Costeños
Drug Trafficking Organizations	Clan del Golfo (Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia) Los Rastrojos Los Caquetaños Los Puntilleros La Pachenca Los Acuamanes

³⁴Not FARC defectors joined the dissidents; some have been recruited into the ELN and other groups.

Table A2: Contested Municipalities

Department	Municipality	Selected	PDET	Department	Municipality	Selected	PDET
Antioquia	Medellín			La Guajira	Riohacha		
Antioquia	Anorí			La Guajira	Dibulla	Y	Y
Antioquia	Bello			La Guajira	Maicao	Y	
Antioquia	Chigorodó	Y	Y	La Guajira	Manaure	Y	Y
Antioquia	Ebéjico	Y		Magdalena	Santa Marta		
Antioquia	El Bagre	Y	Y	Magdalena	Ciénaga	Y	Y
Antioquia	Puerto Berrío	Y		Meta	Acacías	Y	
Antioquia	Puerto Nare	Y		Meta	Mapiripán		
Antioquia	Puerto Triunfo			Meta	Puerto Concordia		
Antioquia	Remedios	Y	Y	Meta	Puerto Gaitán	Y	
Antioquia	San Jerónimo			Meta	Puerto Rico		
Antioquia	San Luis			Meta	Vistahermosa	Y	
Antioquia	Segovia	Y	Y	Nariño	Barbacoas		
Antioquia	Sopetrán	Y		Nariño	El Charco	Y	Y
Antioquia	Tarazá			Nariño	La Tola		
Antioquia	Valdivia			Nariño	Santa Bárbara		
Antioquia	Yarumal	Y		Norte de Santander	Cúcuta		
Antioquia	Yondó	Y	Y	Norte de Santander	Abrego	Y	
Antioquia	Vigía del Fuerte			Nariño	San Andres de Tumaco	Y	Y
Antioquia	Zaragoza			Norte de Santander	Convención	Y	Y
Atlántico	Barranquilla			Norte de Santander	El Carmen	Y	Y
Atlántico	Malambo	Y		Norte de Santander	El Tarra		
Atlántico	Puerto Colombia	Y		Norte de Santander	El Zulia	Y	
Atlántico	Soledad			Norte de Santander	Hacarí	Y	Y
Atlántico	Tubará			Norte de Santander	La Playa	Y	
Bolívar	Cartagena			Norte de Santander	Ocaña	Y	
Bolívar	Arenal			Norte de Santander	San Calixto	Y	Y
Bolívar	Cantagallo			Norte de Santander	Sardinata	Y	Y
Bolívar	Montecristo			Norte de Santander	Teorama		
Bolívar	San Pablo	Y	Y	Norte de Santander	Tibú		
Bolívar	Santa Rosa del Sur	Y	Y	Santander	Barrancabermeja	Y	
Caquetá	San Vicente del Caguán	Y	Y	Sucre	Sincelejo		
Cauca	Argelia	Y	Y	Sucre	Corozal		
Cauca	Balboa			Sucre	Sampués	Y	
Cauca	Guapi			Valle del Cauca	Cali		
Cauca	López			Valle del Cauca	Bolívar		
Cauca	Toribio			Valle del Cauca	Buenaventura	Y	Y
Cesar	Aguachica	Y		Valle del Cauca	Guadalajara de Buga	Y	
Cesar	Agustín Codazzi	Y	Y	Valle del Cauca	Calima	Y	
Cesar	La Paz			Valle del Cauca	Riofrío		
Cesar	San Martín			Valle del Cauca	San Pedro		
Córdoba	Puerto Libertador			Valle del Cauca	Trujillo	Y	
Córdoba	Tierralta	Y	Y	Valle del Cauca	Tuluá	Y	
Chocó	Alto Baudó			Valle del Cauca	Zarzal	Y	
Chocó	Bajo Baudó	Y		Arauca	Arauquita	Y	Y
Chocó	Carmen del Darien			Arauca	Puerto Rondón	Y	
Chocó	El Litoral del San Juan	Y	Y	Arauca	Tame	Y	Y
Chocó	Istmina			Casanare	Sácama	Y	
Chocó	Lloró			Putumayo	Villagarzón		
Chocó	Riosucio(2)	Y	Y	Guaviare	San José del Guaviare	Y	Y
Chocó	Sipí			Vichada	La Primavera	Y	
Chocó	Unguía						

B PAYMENTS FOR SURVEY RESPONDENTS

As noted in the manuscript, we chose not to provide remuneration to survey participants in order to prevent them from being subjected to unwanted scrutiny from others, including armed groups. Although it was unlikely, we wanted to avoid survey participants being perceived as informants or being made potential targets of violence as a result.

C ENUMERATION

Several municipalities and towns had to be replaced due to security conditions. When a municipality was replaced, another municipality in the same strata was selected with a probability proportional to its projected 2022 population. If a specific hamlet was unsafe, another in the same municipality was selected with a probability proportional to its projected 2022 population. If it was impossible to work in *any* hamlets in a given municipality, we randomly drew an eligible municipality—one already selected for surveying, and within which hamlets had not already been selected—from the same strata. In total, we replaced 3 municipalities due to security concerns and replaced 14 hamlets: one due to a landslide, one due to poor roads, and 12 due to security. Our pre-analysis plan did not contain details about replacement.

Another difficulty in enumeration concerned the gender of our respondents. Given that many men work outside the home, and even beyond their home municipalities, surveying men turned out to be more challenging than expected. As of July 18, 2022, approximately two-thirds of our 1,529 respondents were women. We thus temporarily halted data collection on July 18, and we made two methodological decisions which constituted deviations from the pre-analysis plan: we altered the sampling of respondents within households, and we surveyed additional respondents. More specifically, from July 19th onward, men were two times as likely as women to be selected within households. Additionally, at the end of the fieldwork, we conducted 80 additional surveys with men in the 4 municipalities with the largest gender imbalance: Santa Rosa del Sur, Augstín Codazzi, Puerto Berrío, and Remedios. With these changes, 39.9% of our respondents were men and 59.9% were women. The additional 80 respondents were the primary reason we collected surveys from 2,397 respondents, instead of the 2,300 we had planned.

The additional 17 extra respondents were the product of uncertainty surrounding response rates; once individuals were selected, enumerators followed the procedures to survey those individuals, even if the desired or anticipated number of respondents within a given block, municipality, or strata had already been surveyed. See Figure A1 for details about how many surveys were planned (“Esperadas”) and completed (“Efectivas”) in each municipality, and see Table A3 for a description of how many blocks were sampled and how many surveys were completed in each municipality.

Table A3: Blocks and Surveys by Municipality

Municipality	# of Blocks	# of Surveys	Municipality	# of Blocks	# of Surveys
13670	7	30	54398	5	19
13688	14	50	54498	17	52
18753	10	50	54670	8	32
19050	9	33	54720	10	45
20011	10	40	5579	14	80
20013	14	58	5585	7	37
23807	10	46	5604	11	60
27077	5	18	5736	8	44
27250	6	25	5761	9	37
27615	5	19	5887	16	62
44090	7	33	5893	11	38
44430	10	53	68081	21	88
44560	6	36	70670	6	30
47189	11	56	76109	12	68
50006	26	88	76111	10	48
50568	12	48	76126	5	26
50711	13	38	76828	8	27
5172	12	58	76834	19	82
52250	6	28	76895	8	29
5240	10	36	81065	14	62
5250	13	53	81591	7	30
52835	16	59	81794	11	49
54003	8	31	8433	12	44
54206	13	50	85315	5	27
54245	14	61	8573	6	30
54261	8	32	95001	16	52
54344	10	42	99524	7	28

Figure A1: Anticipated and Completed Surveys by Municipality

Municipio	Región DANE	Zona urbana			Zona rural (CP)			Total encuestas esperadas	Total encuestas efectivas	% cobertura del municipio
		Esperadas	Efectivas	% Cobertura	Esperadas	Efectivas	% Cobertura			
Puerto Gaitán	3. Territorios nacionales	32	32	100%	16	16	100%	48	48	100%
La Primavera	3. Territorios nacionales	19	19	100%	10	9	90%	29	28	97%
Tame	3. Territorios nacionales	34	33	97%	16	16	100%	50	49	98%
Sácama	3. Territorios nacionales	27	27	100%	-	-	-	27	27	100%
Araucita	3. Territorios nacionales	36	36	100%	26	26	100%	62	62	100%
Puerto Rondón	3. Territorios nacionales	27	30	111%	-	-	-	27	30	111%
Vistahermosa	3. Territorios nacionales	25	27	108%	11	11	100%	36	38	106%
San José del Guaviare	3. Territorios nacionales	36	36	100%	16	16	100%	52	52	100%
San Vicente del Caguán	3. Territorios nacionales	45	45	100%	5	5	100%	50	50	100%
Puerto Berrio	4. Antioquia	53	53	100%	27	27	100%	80	80	100%
Puerto Nare	4. Antioquia	25	25	100%	12	12	100%	37	37	100%
Segovia	4. Antioquia	30	30	100%	14	14	100%	44	44	100%
Remedios	4. Antioquia	39	39	100%	21	21	100%	60	60	100%
Ebéjico	4. Antioquia	24	24	100%	12	12	100%	36	36	100%
Sopetrán	4. Antioquia	25	25	100%	12	12	100%	37	37	100%
Yarumal	4. Antioquia	42	43	102%	19	19	100%	61	62	102%
El Bagre	4. Antioquia	36	36	100%	17	17	100%	53	53	100%
Chigorodó	4. Antioquia	39	39	100%	18	19	106%	57	58	102%
Riosucio	2. Pacífico	19	19	100%	-	-	-	19	19	100%
Barrancabermeja	5. Santanderes	54	52	96%	34	36	106%	88	88	100%
Yondó	4. Antioquia	24	26	108%	12	12	100%	36	38	106%
Abrego	5. Santanderes	31	31	100%	-	-	-	31	31	100%
Convención	5. Santanderes	28	28	100%	22	22	100%	50	50	100%
Ocaña	5. Santanderes	35	35	100%	17	17	100%	52	52	100%
La Playa	5. Santanderes	19	19	100%	-	-	-	19	19	100%
El Zulia	5. Santanderes	21	21	100%	11	11	100%	32	32	100%

 Información de valor para un mundo mejor

Estudio para la medición de actitudes de la población civil – Recolección en hogares

Informe final de trabajo de campo

Municipio	Región DANE	Zona urbana			Zona rural (CP)			Total encuestas esperadas	Total encuestas efectivas	% cobertura del municipio
		Esperadas	Efectivas	% Cobertura	Esperadas	Efectivas	% Cobertura			
Sardinata	5. Santanderes	30	31	103%	14	14	100%	44	45	102%
El Carmen	5. Santanderes	48	50	104%	11	11	100%	59	61	103%
Hacarí	5. Santanderes	29	29	100%	13	13	100%	42	42	100%
San Calixto	5. Santanderes	26	26	100%	12	6	50%	38	32	84%
Totales		1665	1677	100.72%	723	720	99.58%	2388	2397	100.4%

Fuente: Elaboración propia, SEI, a partir de los resultados del operativo de recolección 2022.

D NUMERIC RESULTS

Table A4: Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs) of Governance Attributes

	Forced Choice: Change in Probability (Judged “Worse”)	Rating: Change in “How Negative”
Services & Goods		
Very few	0.000	0.000
Medicine	-0.082*** (0.009)	-0.138*** (0.025)
Roads	-0.100*** (0.009)	-0.178*** (0.025)
Dispute resolution	-0.071*** (0.009)	-0.152*** (0.025)
Rules		
No consideration	0.000	0.000
Reflect local traditions	-0.051*** (0.008)	-0.100*** (0.021)
Consults with leaders	-0.060*** (0.008)	-0.142*** (0.021)
Support		
Few people	0.000	0.000
Community members	-0.011 (0.008)	-0.054* (0.021)
Friends and family	-0.016* (0.008)	-0.053* (0.022)
Punishment		
Lots of violence	0.000	0.000
Little violence	-0.131*** (0.007)	-0.262*** (0.019)
Ideology		
No position	0.000	0.000
Left-wing	0.018* (0.008)	-0.017 (0.021)
Right-wing	0.003 (0.008)	-0.040° (0.021)

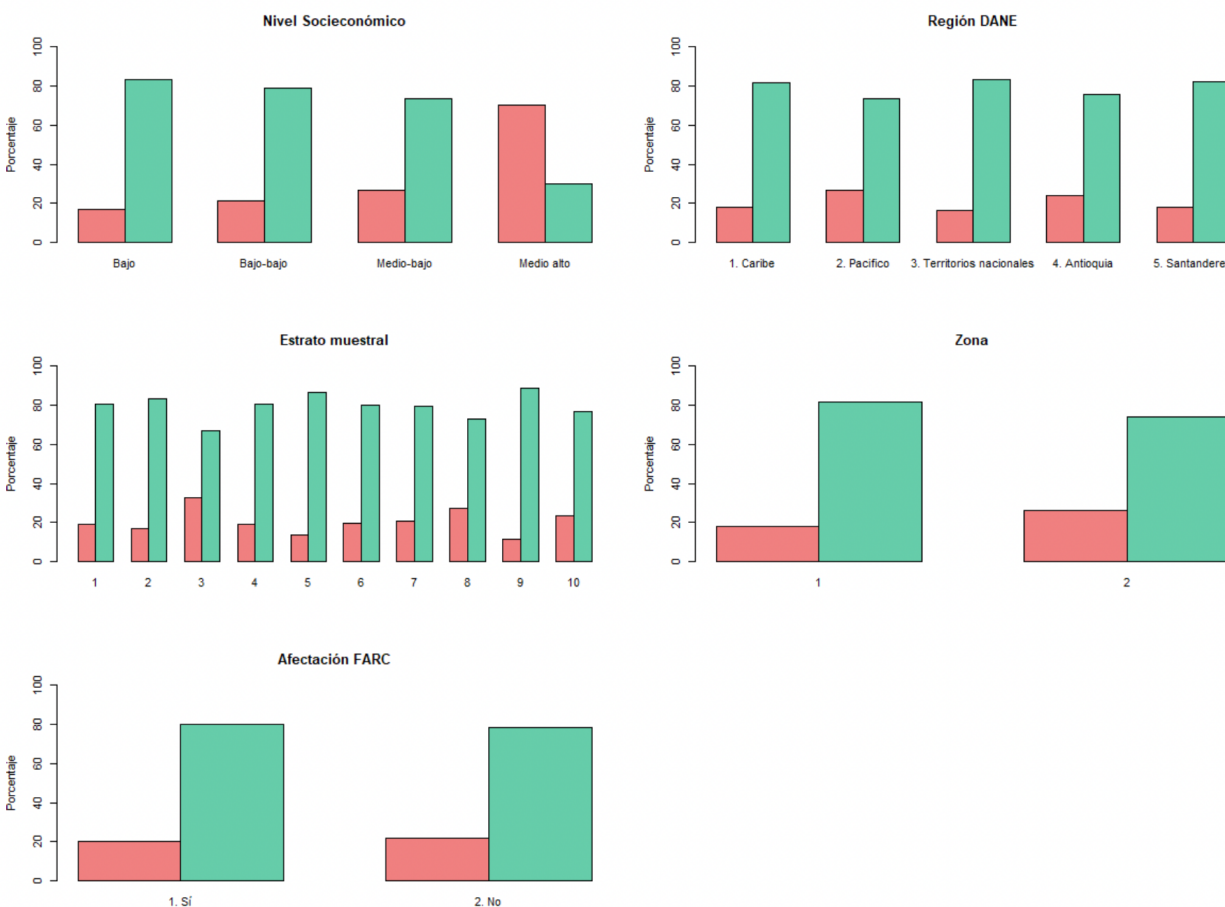
*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ° $p < 0.1$

E SURVEY WEIGHTS

Our survey weights were constructed using strata, gender, and age. They take into account non-response at the block, household, individual levels and smooth to reduce the effects of outliers.

Blocks can be “non-responsive” for two reasons: (1) the cartographic information provided by the National Statistics Agency (DANE) does not correspond to what is encountered in the field; or (2) no surveys are carried out on a selected block. These blocks take a value of 1 on a dummy variable indicating block-level non-response. Figure A2, in which red bars indicate non-response, shows that socioeconomic status affects non-response; region, PDET status, and rurality do not.

Figure A2: Levels of Non-Response at the block level



Four methods were used to model block-level non-response. Using 36 variables from the census, SEI selected relevant variables to predict block-level non-response using (1) a “saturated” model, which included all 36 variables (in the case of multicollinearity, a penalized Ridge regression was used); (2) stepwise selection of variables; (3) penalized Lasso, using 10-fold cross-validation; and (4) Random Forest, using cross-validation to optimize the Area Under the Curve (AUC) for the Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curve. The confusion tables for these four approaches were compared to assess accuracy, and the percentage of false positives and false negatives were calculated. The Random Forest model maximized the AUC for the ROC (equal to 0.65) and also helped control false positives/negatives. As such, we use the Random Forest estimations.

At the household level, a classic non-response adjustment was implemented to the basic sampling factors at this stage. Non-response at the household level can occur due to rejection, the fact that a suitable informant was busy or absent, etc. The basic adjustment factor proposed by (Bautista, 1998) for non-response, was used:

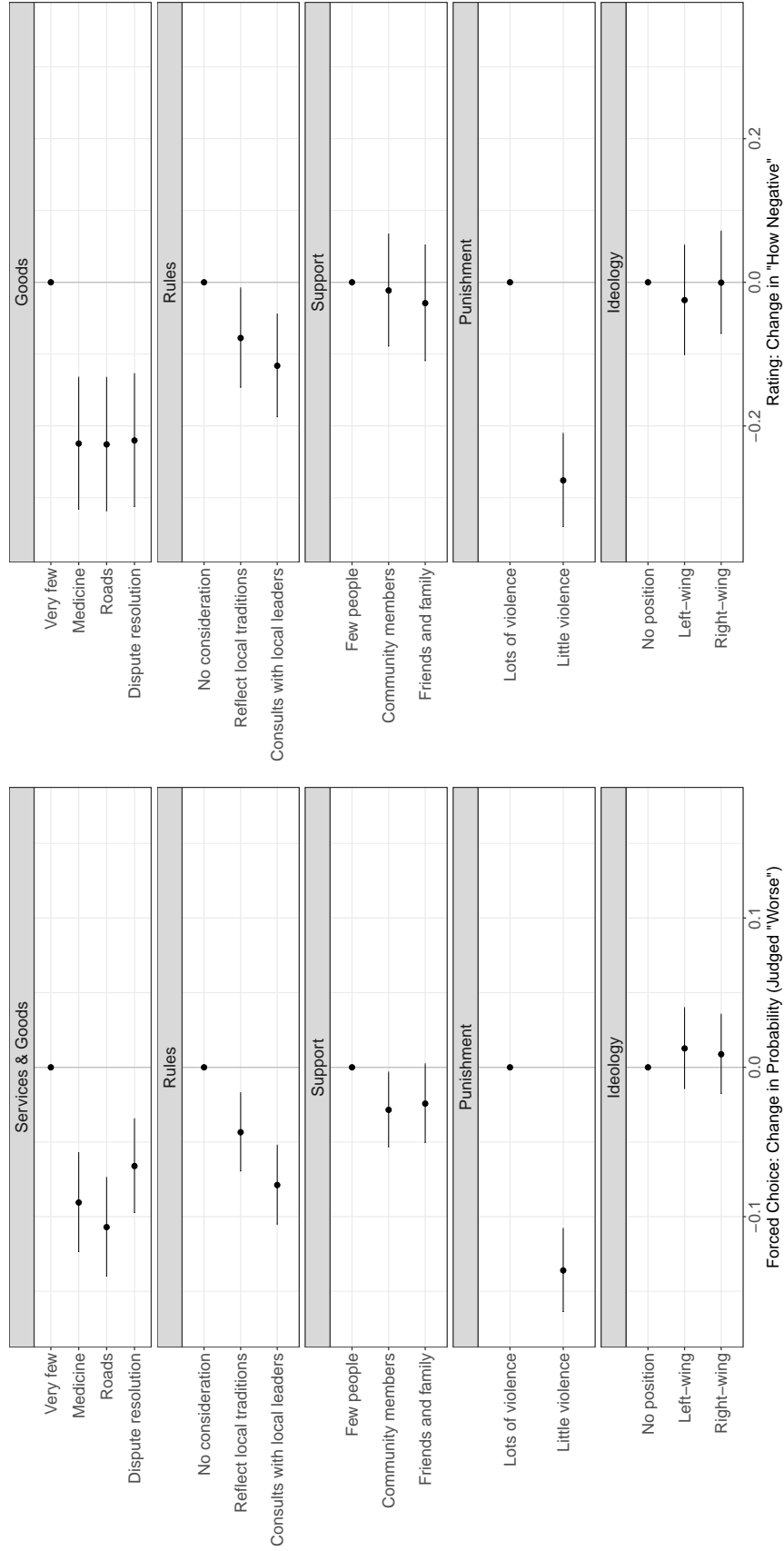
$$f_{adjusted} = \frac{n + n_{ad} - n_{fu}}{n + n_{ad} - n_{fu} - n_r} \quad (1)$$

Once this factor is determined, it is multiplied by the final basic factor to generate the expansion factor adjusted for non-response at the household level.

We also smooth to control for atypical values that observed after the calculation of final expansion factors and after adjusting for non-response. When subjected to the above-mentioned calibration techniques, some sub-groups are overrepresented. We identify respondents that represent 15,000 or more individuals in the population sample, which can generate bias. Therefore, the smoothing technique was implemented to "smooth" the effect of the outliers observed in the calibrated expansion factors. While the survey firm provided us with two sets of smoothing options, we only report on the version we use in the robustness checks in the manuscript.

We take into account the levels of the strata (5 regions and 2 possible levels of FARC affectation), zone (municipal center or rural hamlet) and sex (male and female), for a total of 40 domains. To determine atypical values, we identify any observation that has an expansion factor larger than the average plus two standard deviations.

Figure A3: Weighted Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs) of Governance Attributes



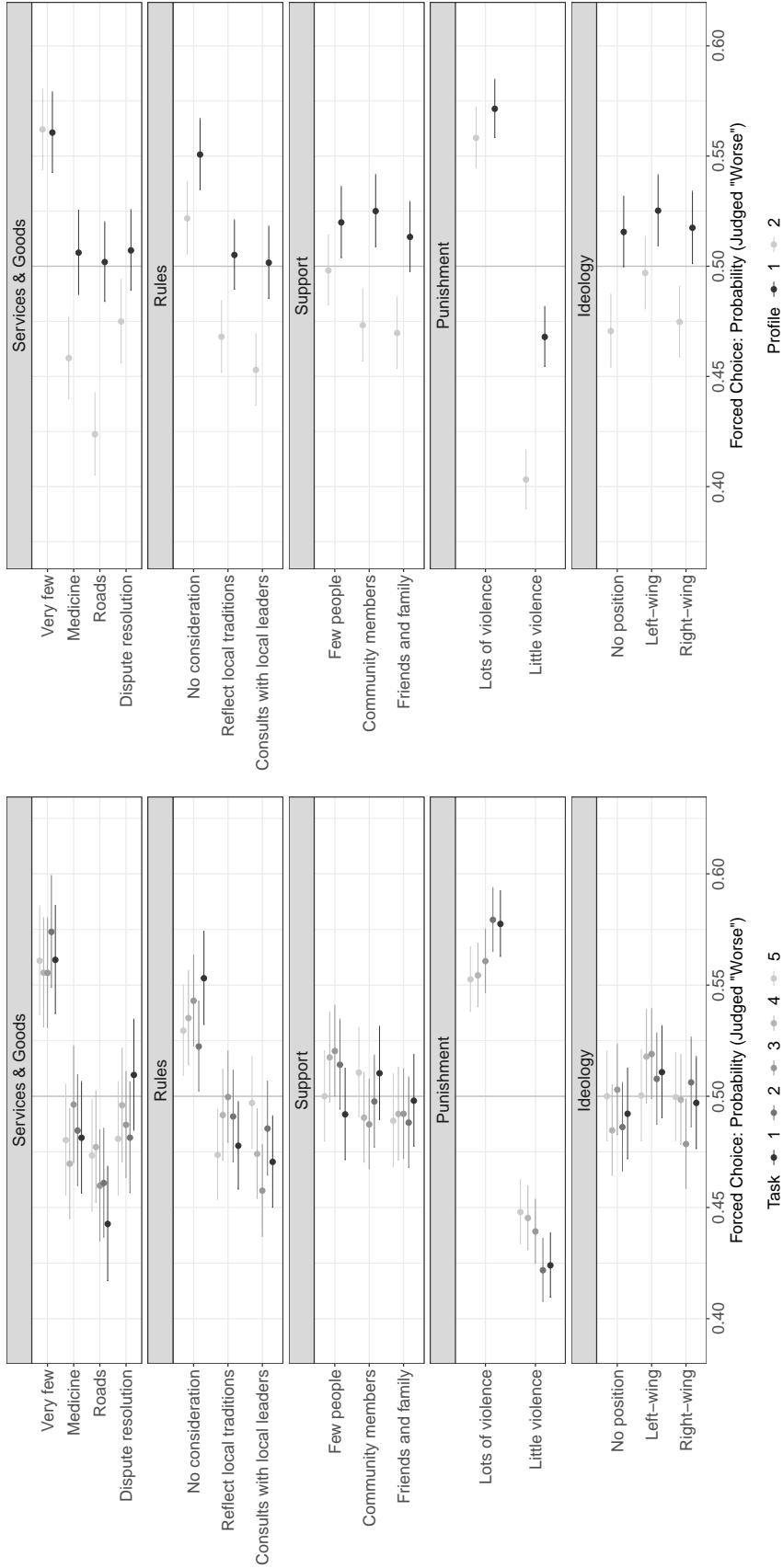
F DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

Table A5: Randomization Tests

	Woman	Education	Age	Income
(Intercept)	0.591*** (0.011)	4.523*** (0.049)	42.481*** (0.359)	2.114*** (0.024)
Services & Goods				
Medicine	-0.023* (0.009)	-0.049 (0.041)	0.444 (0.306)	-0.005 (0.020)
Roads	0.000 (0.009)	-0.025 (0.041)	0.532° (0.306)	-0.007 (0.020)
Dispute resolution	-0.008 (0.009)	-0.037 (0.041)	0.294 (0.305)	-0.001 (0.020)
Rules				
Reflect local traditions	0.005 (0.008)	0.065° (0.036)	-0.253 (0.265)	-0.006 (0.018)
Consults with leaders	0.010 (0.008)	0.054 (0.036)	0.109 (0.267)	-0.005 (0.018)
Support				
Community members	0.004 (0.008)	-0.001 (0.036)	-0.061 (0.265)	0.002 (0.018)
Friends and family	0.012 (0.008)	0.015 (0.036)	-0.317 (0.266)	-0.011 (0.018)
Punishment				
Little violence	-0.005 (0.006)	0.008 (0.029)	-0.031 (0.217)	0.004 (0.014)
Ideology				
Left-wing	0.007 (0.008)	-0.045 (0.036)	0.409 (0.266)	-0.018 (0.018)
Right-wing	0.009 (0.008)	0.027 (0.036)	-0.057 (0.265)	-0.008 (0.018)
R ²	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000
Adj. R ²	0.000	-0.000	0.000	-0.000
Num. obs.	23004	23004	23004	22828

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ° $p < 0.1$

Figure A4: Marginal Means Carryover & Profile Order Effects



G SUB-GROUP ANALYSIS

In our pre-analysis plan, we registered the following exploratory subgroup analyses: gender, racial identity, respondent ideology, attitudes towards the state, prior exposure to violence, and whether a respondent lives in an area hard hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. For visualizations of statistically significant subgroup heterogeneity discovered in the F-tests as suggested by (Leeper, Hobolt and Tilley 2022) in Table A6, see Figures A4, A5, A6, and A7. An alternative approach to examining heterogeneity in conjoint experiments is a machine learning approach described in Ham, Imai and Janson (2022). This produces, for each forced choice conjoint attribute, the most significant two-way interactions given all other factors, which in this case are those variables listed in Table A6 under *Survey Responses* as well as PDET, Rural, and Greater-than-Average COVID Municipal Death Rate. This machine learning approach indicates that the most significant interactions with conjoint attributes are as follows: Rural (Goods), More than High School Education (Rules), Distrust between Community and Police (Support), Rural (Punishment), and Left (Ideology). As such, the F-tests and machine learning approach broadly suggest that there is subgroup heterogeneity across different values of the same variables.

Table A6: Nested Forced Choice Model Comparison Test of Preference Heterogeneity

Model comparison	F Statistic	P-Value
<i>Survey Responses</i>		
JAC participation	1.23	.26
Woman	.45	.94
Victim	.80	.64
More than High School Education	4.61	.00
Indigenous	1.40	.17
Afro-Colombian	.68	.76
Left (1-5 on 10-pt scale)	5.59	.00
Distrust between Community and Police	1.19	.18
Police Patrol Once/Month or Less	3.40	.00
State Has Right to Tax	.86	.73
<i>Non-Survey Data About Communities</i>		
PDET	1.39	.17
Rural	17.8	.00
Greater-than-Avg. COVID Municipal Death Rate	1.10	.35
Municipality in Top Quartile State Control (Anders 2020)	.69	.75
Municipality Has 1+ Month Rebel Control (Anders 2020)	1.54	.11
PNCRT	1.19	.29
<i>Conjoint</i>		
Task Number	1.01	.45
Profile	6.89	.00
Services & Goods	6.89	.00
Rules	4.79	.00
Support	1.73	.03
Punishment	41.80	.00
Ideology	1.70	.03

Figure A5: Marginal Means Heterogeneity Part 1, Rural and Police Absence

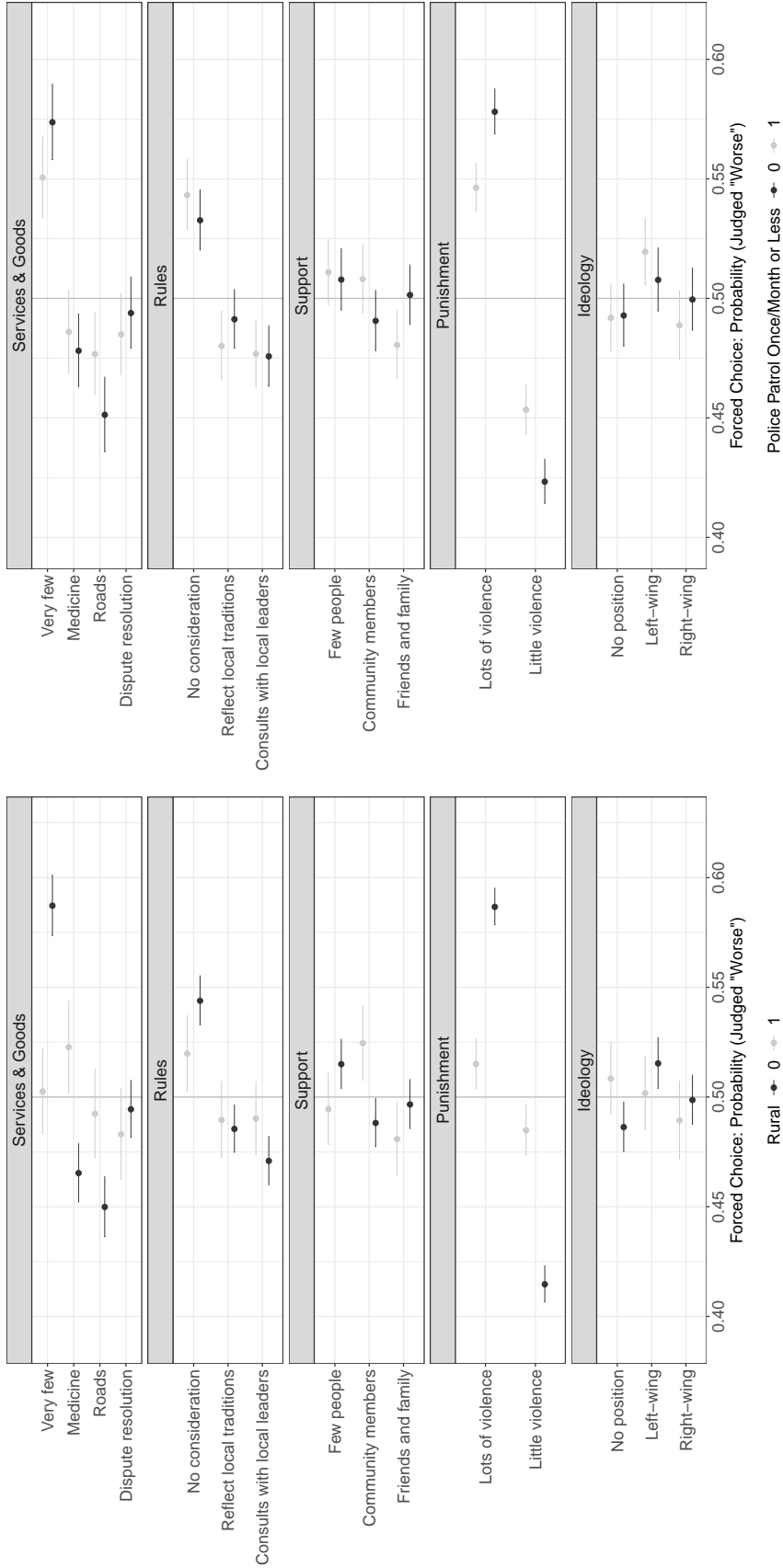


Figure A6: Marginal Means Heterogeneity Part 2, Education and Respondent Ideology

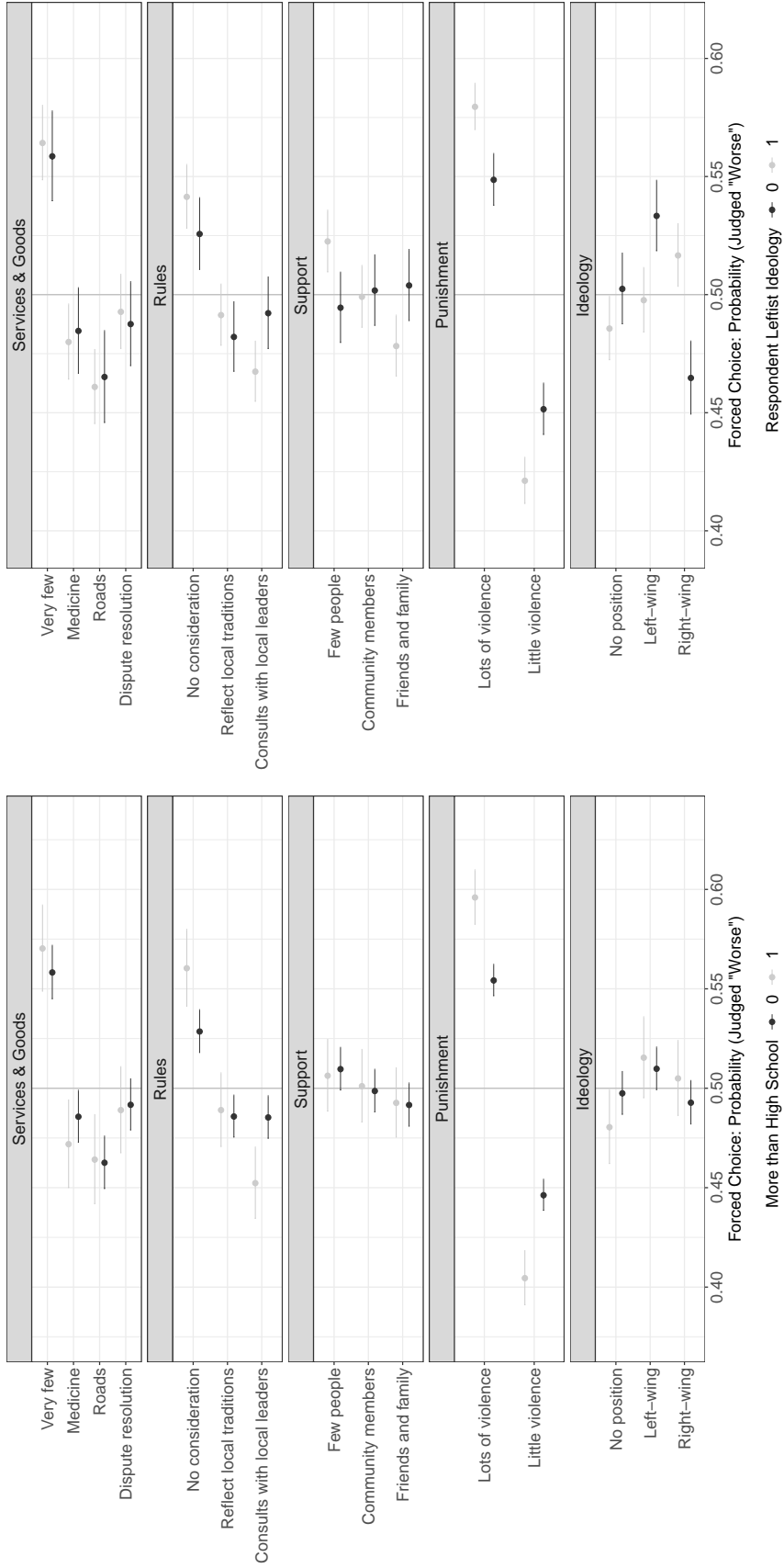
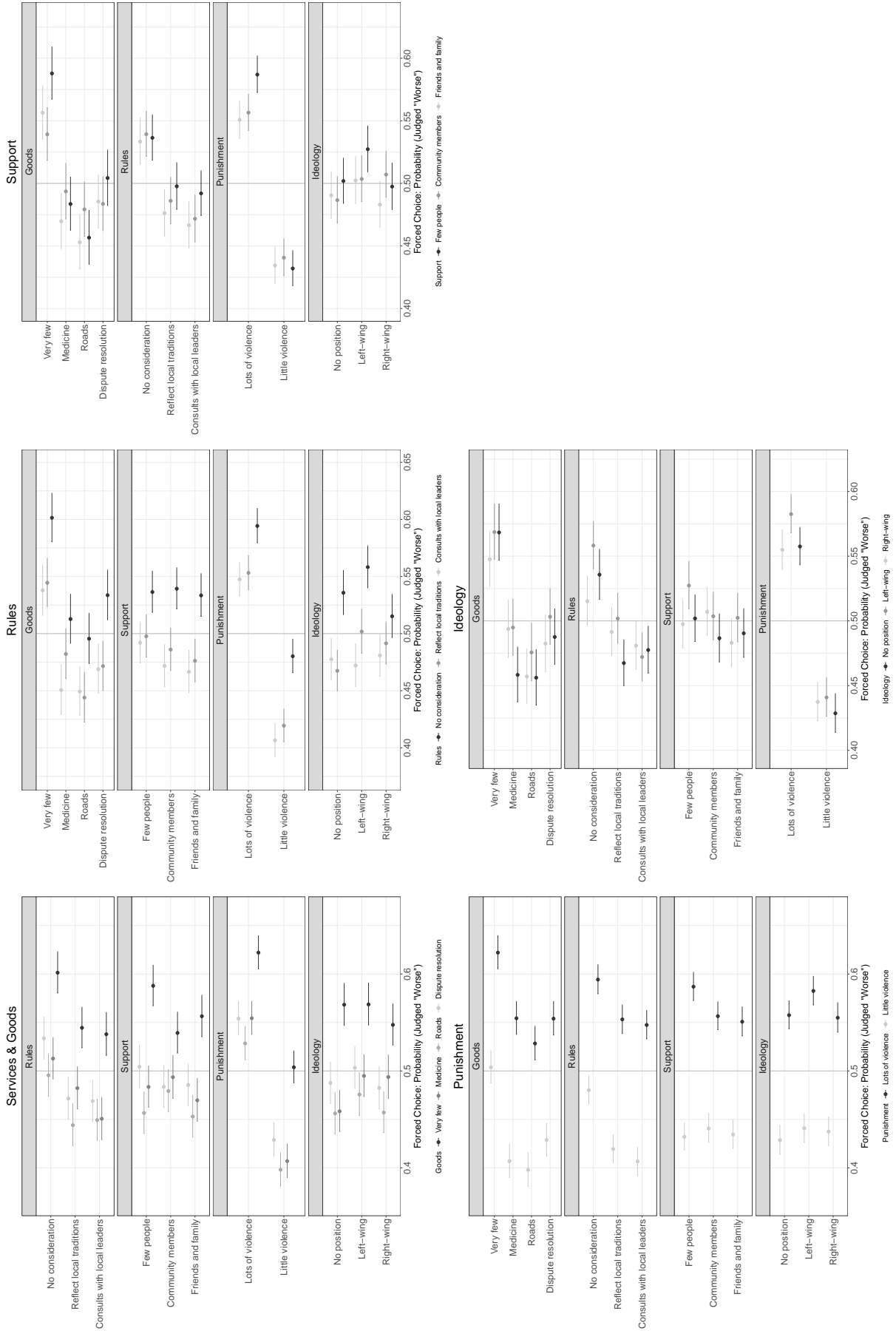


Figure A7: Marginal Means Heterogeneity Part 3, Conjoint Attributes



H ADJUSTMENTS FOR MULTIPLE HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Table A7: Adjusted P-Values, Forced Choice

Level	1. Original	2. Adjusted, Bonferroni (16)	3. Adjusted, Bonferroni (32)	4. Adjusted, Hochberg	5. Adjusted, Adaptive Shrinkage
Medicine	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Roads	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Dispute resolution	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Reflects local traditions	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Consults with local leaders	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Community members	0.176	2.820	5.639	0.352	0.392
Friends and family	0.041	0.651	1.302	0.122	0.353
Little violence	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Left-wing	0.029	0.459	0.919	0.115	0.323
Right-wing	0.757	12.107	24.213	0.757	0.429

Note: Bonferroni corrections provide more stringent thresholds of statistical significance as the number of tests increases. The Bonferroni correction in model 2 divides each p-value by 16 because that is the total number of comparisons made in the forced choice model; the correction in model 3 divides each p-value by 32 because the 16 comparisons are made in both the rating and forced choice models. The Benjamini-Hochberg correction in model 4 ranks all p-values from smallest (in this case, rank=10) to largest (rank=1) and then multiplies each by its rank. The adaptive shrinkage approach, as recommended by Liu and Shiraito (2023), adjusts for multiple hypotheses tests by incorporating information about not only the number of tests but also the size of the coefficients. It takes an Empirical Bayes approach. Model 5 assumes that the mixture distribution is normal.

Table A8: Adjusted P-Values, Rating

Level	1. Original	2. Adjusted, Bonferroni (16)	3. Adjusted, Bonferroni (32)	4. Adjusted, Hochberg	5. Adjusted, Adaptive Shrinkage
Medicine	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Roads	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Dispute resolution	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Reflects local traditions	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Consults with local leaders	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Community members	0.010	0.163	0.325	0.041	0.039
Friends and family	0.015	0.240	0.480	0.045	0.076
Little violence	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Left-wing	0.410	6.565	13.130	0.410	0.336
Right-wing	0.065	1.033	2.066	0.129	0.298

Note: Bonferroni corrections provide more stringent thresholds of statistical significance as the number of tests increases. The Bonferroni correction in model 2 divides each p-value by 16 because that is the total number of comparisons made in the rating model; the correction in model 3 divides each p-value by 32 because the 16 comparisons are made in both the rating and forced choice models. The Benjamini-Hochberg correction in model 4 ranks all p-values from smallest (in this case, rank=10) to largest (rank=1) and then multiplies each by its rank. The adaptive shrinkage approach, as recommended by Liu and Shiraito (2023), adjusts for multiple hypotheses tests by incorporating information about not only the number of tests but also the size of the coefficients. It takes an Empirical Bayes approach. Model 5 assumes that the mixture distribution is normal.

I ACCOUNTING FOR SURVEY DESIGN

Table A9: Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs) w/ Sampling Clusters & Stratas

	Forced Choice: Change in Probability (Judged “Worse”)	Rating: Change in “How Negative”
Services & Goods		
Very few	0.000	0.000
Medicine	-0.082*** (0.008)	-0.138*** (0.022)
Roads	-0.100*** (0.009)	-0.178*** (0.025)
Dispute resolution	-0.071*** (0.008)	-0.152*** (0.029)
Rules		
No consideration	0.000	0.000
Reflect local traditions	-0.051*** (0.008)	-0.100*** (0.019)
Consults with leaders	-0.060*** (0.008)	-0.142*** (0.020)
Support		
Few people	0.000	0.000
Community members	-0.011 (0.009)	-0.054** (0.019)
Friends and family	-0.016 (0.010)	-0.053** (0.018)
Punishment		
Lots of violence	0.000	0.000
Little violence	-0.131*** (0.008)	-0.262*** (0.020)
Ideology		
No position	0.000	0.000
Left-wing	0.018* (0.009)	-0.017 (0.023)
Right-wing	0.003 (0.008)	-0.040 ^o (0.022)

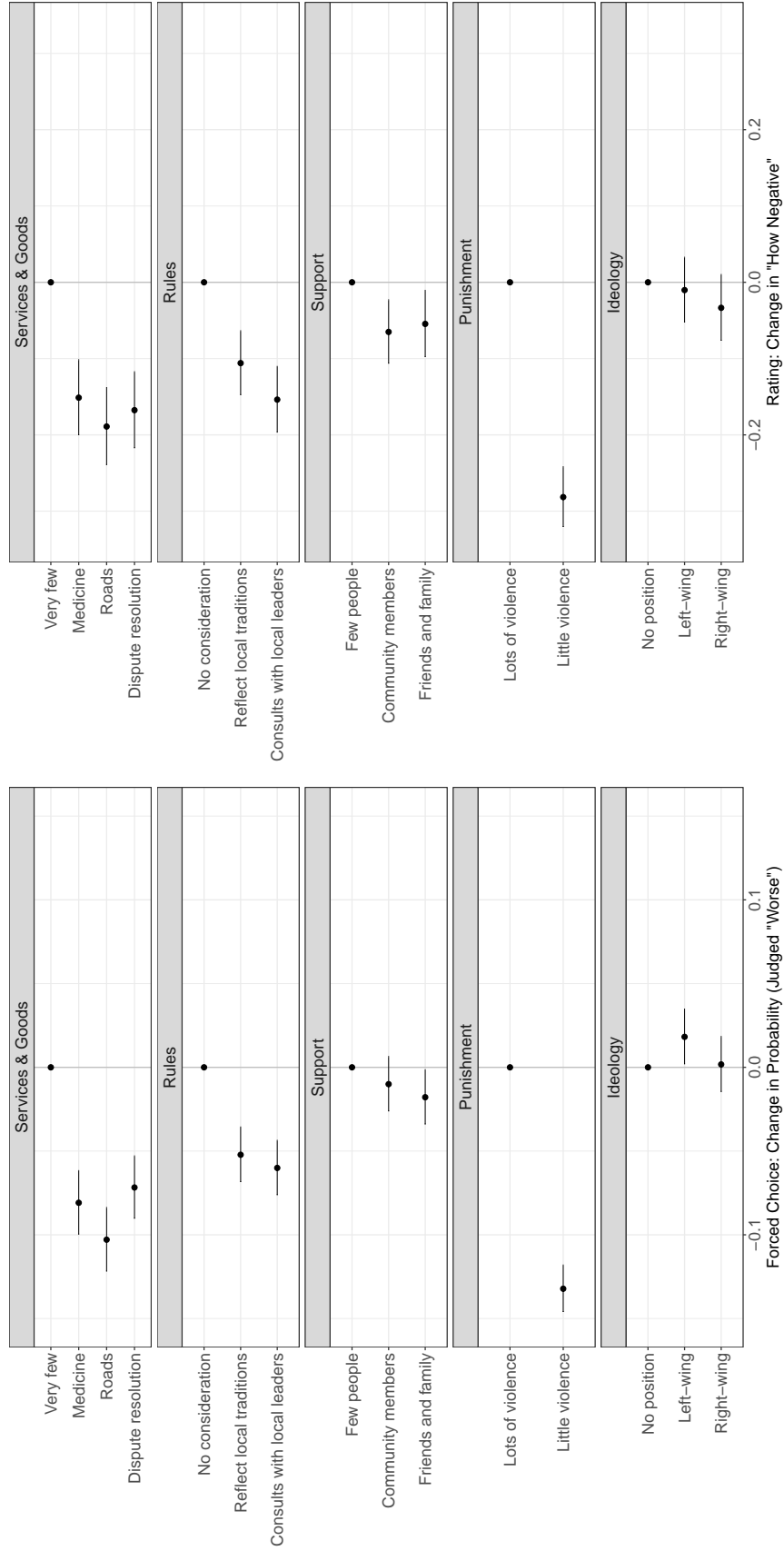
*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ^o $p < 0.1$

J RATINGS RESPONSES

Table A10: Ratings Responses

Rating Response	Number	Percent
1 (not at all)	2348	9.80
2	3533	14.74
3	4936	20.59
4	5262	21.95
5 (very)	7476	31.19
NA	415	1.73
Total	23970	100

Figure A8: Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs) Removing Respondents Who Answered Identically to All Profiles



K PRE-REGISTERED HYPOTHESES ON LEGACIES OF ARMED GROUP RULE

In the pre-analysis plan, we argued that communities subject to armed group rule are likely to be changed by those experiences. Civilians exposed to effective armed group governance may have higher expectations for goods and service provision, imposing higher standards that future would-be governors must live up to (Mampilly 2011). In Colombia, communities where the FARC historically ruled have witnessed first-hand an armed group that not only provided public goods but also engaged in procedurally coherent governance (Vargas Castillo 2019; Gutiérrez 2021). Relatedly, we argued that wartime experiences can transform gender roles and norms surrounding women's participation in politics (Wood 2008; Viterna 2013). In the Colombian case, beginning in the late 1970s, the FARC recruited women into a number of roles within the organization (Sanín and Carranza Franco 2017). Approximately 30% of FARC members were women (Gutiérrez Sanín 2008).³⁵ Importantly for this argument, people do not have to actively support a governing actor for that actor's presence to change their expectations about future governance. For example, in Colombia, the FARC was more likely to engage in procedurally coherent governance in areas where people were opposed to the guerrillas (Arjona 2016). In Côte d'Ivoire, rebel governance affected people's long-term attitudes about local government institutions in similar ways regardless of whether they were co-ethnics of the armed actors (Martin, Piccolino and Speight 2022).

Armed group rule and goods: The effect of goods and services is stronger among respondents living in areas once under the sustained control of an armed group that effectively provided public goods [the FARC] than in other areas.

Armed group rule and procedural coherence: The effect of procedural coherence is stronger among respondents living in areas once under the sustained control of an armed group that included local actors in governing institutions [the FARC] than in other areas.

Armed group rule and gender: Female respondents living in areas exposed to non-traditional roles for women through the sustained control of an armed group [the FARC] will be more politically engaged than those living in other areas.

We do not find support for our argument that individuals subject to FARC rule will be more likely to prioritize goods or procedural coherence (Figure A9). Indeed, omnibus F-tests (Table A6) show no forced choice subgroup differences across PDET and non-PDET respondents. These null results hold when using using alternative measures of FARC presence from Anders (2020) and participation in the National Policy of Territorial Consolidation and Reconstruction (PNCRT), an aggressive counterinsurgency approach adopted by the Colombian government (Figures A10 and A9).

However, we do find suggestive evidence for our expectation that women respondents living in FARC-controlled areas are more politically engaged than women in areas with no sustained exposure to the FARC. Table A11 indicates that, while women in areas of historical FARC control are no more likely to have voted in the 2022 presidential elections, they are more likely ($p < 0.1$) to

³⁵The FARC also committed extensive violence against women (Comisión para el Escalarecimiento de la Verdad, la Convivencia y la No Repetición 2022), and female FARC combatants faced institutional obstacles to advancement (e.g. Schmidt 2020).

be involved in *Juntas de Acción Comunal*, village boards that are the principal axis for community governance in Colombia, particularly in rural areas (Blair et al. 2022). Given that the FARC worked with JACs (Vargas Castillo 2019; Gutiérrez 2021) but sometimes sabotaged or boycotted elections (Gallego 2018), political socialization may have motivated women to participate only in those realms of politics that the FARC encouraged.

Table A11: Political Participation

	Vote 2022	JAC Participation
(Intercept)	0.395*** (0.057)	-0.061 (0.048)
Woman	-0.018 (0.029)	-0.051* (0.025)
PDET	-0.022 (0.030)	0.022 (0.026)
Education	0.023*** (0.005)	-0.003 (0.004)
Age	0.005*** (0.001)	0.002** (0.001)
Rural	-0.022 (0.024)	0.053** (0.020)
Victim	0.076*** (0.020)	0.107*** (0.017)
Ideology	0.000 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)
Income	-0.000 (0.010)	-0.005 (0.009)
Police Presence	0.010 (0.007)	0.046*** (0.006)
Woman x PDET	0.005 (0.039)	0.059° (0.033)
R ²	0.039	0.093
Adj. R ²	0.034	0.088
Num. obs.	1985	1985

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$; ° $p < 0.1$

Figure A9: Marginal Means Heterogeneity, FARC Presence (PDET & PNCRT)

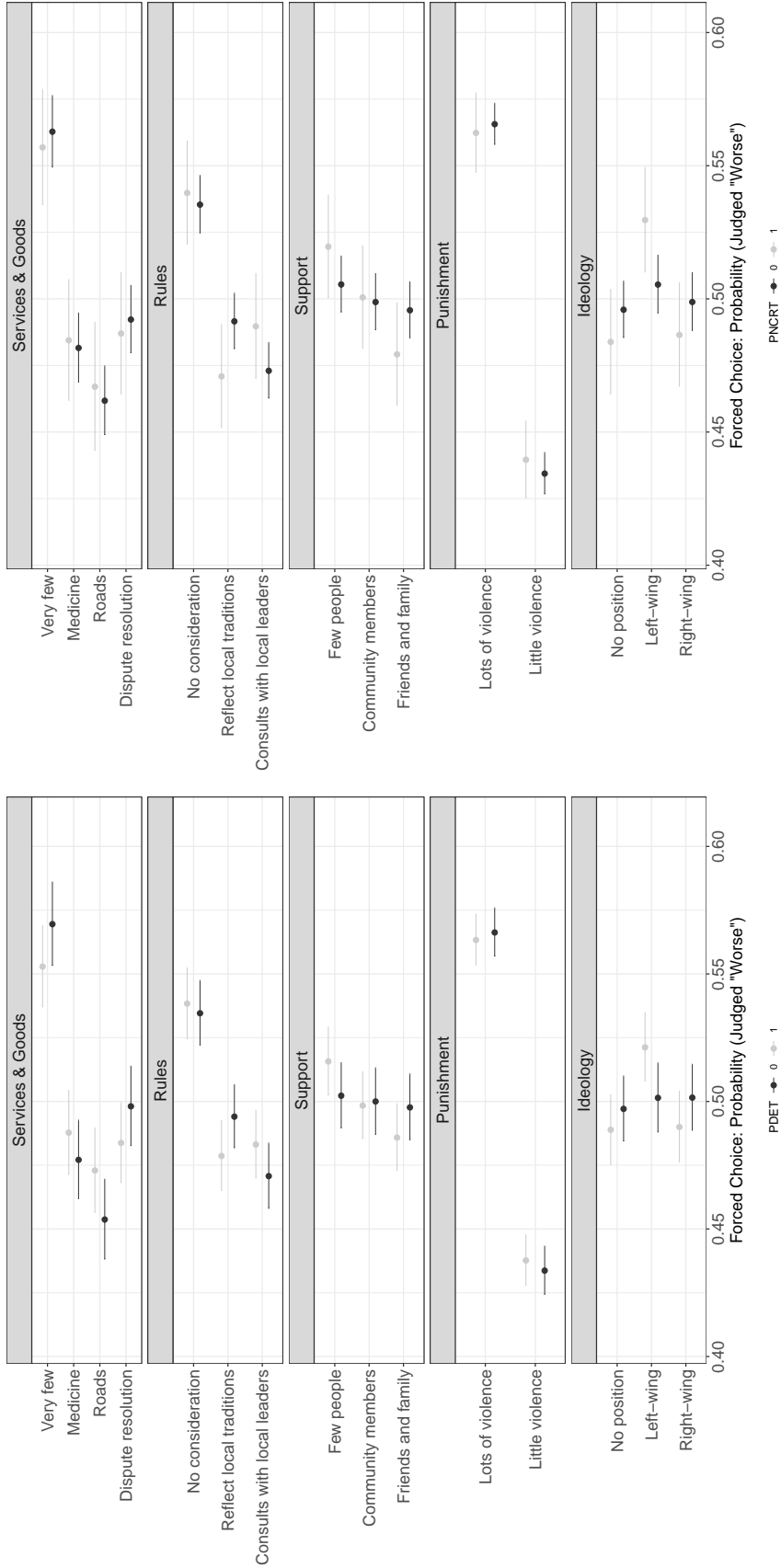
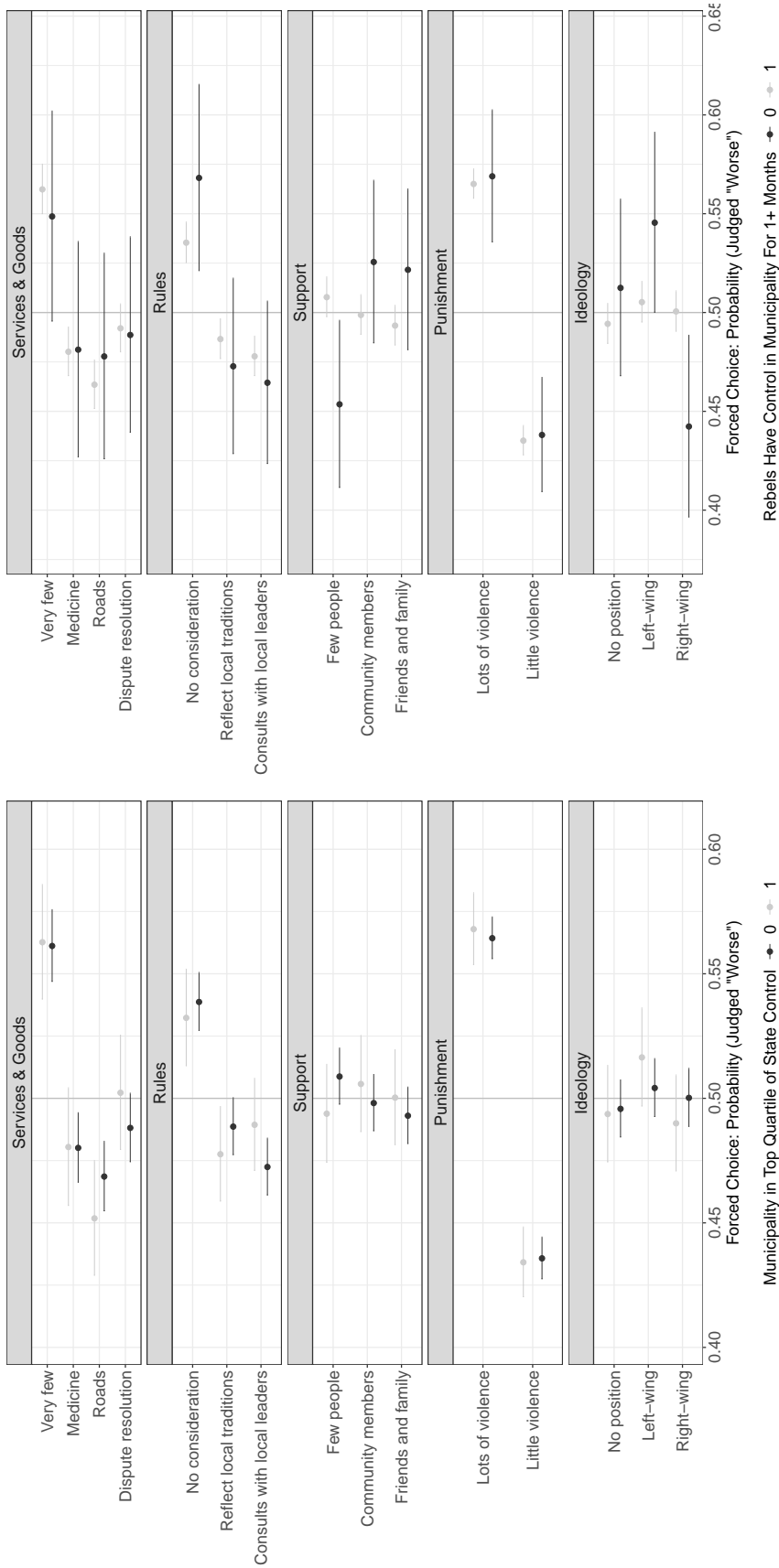


Figure A10: Marginal Means Heterogeneity, FARC Presence (Anders 2020 Data)



L DEMOGRAPHICS

Table A12: Universe and Sample Demographics

	Universe	Sample
Female	53%	59%
More than High School Education	20%	25%
Indigenous	2%	5%
Afro-Colombian	19%	19%
20-39 Year Olds as % of Adults 20+	49%	45%
40-59 as % of Adults 20+	33%	33%
Over 60 as % of Adults 20+	17%	21%

Note: Here the “Universe” refers to all municipalities defined as contested in [A2](#). Data comes from the 2018 Colombian census.

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